

5321
873

12.12.05.

From the Library of
Professor Samuel Miller
in Memory of
Judge Samuel Miller Breckinridge
Presented by
Samuel Miller Breckinridge Long
to the Library of
Princeton Theological Seminary

SCC
7445
v. 2





A
NEW HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE,
FROM THE
Beginning of the World,
TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT of CHRISTIANITY.

WITH
ANSWERS to most of the Controverted Questions,
DISSERTATIONS upon the most remarkable PASSAGES,
and a CONNECTION of PROFANE HISTORY all along.

To which are added,
NOTES, explaining difficult Texts, rectifying Mis-Translations, and
reconciling seeming Contradictions.

The Whole illustrated with proper MAPS.

By the Reverend THOMAS STACKHOUSE,
A. M. Vicar of Beenham in Berkshire.

V O L. II.

D U B L I N:

Printed for EDWARD and JOHN EXSHAW at the *Bible* on
Cork-Hill. M,DCC,XLVIII.

ERRATA to *VOL. II.*

P. 442. l. 15. last note *for* Snahedrim *r.* Sanhedrim.

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
B I B L E.

B O O K I I I.

*Containing an Account of Things, from the Calling of
ABRAHAM, to the ISRAELITES Departure out of
EGYPT. In all 430 Years.*

C H A P. I.

Of the Life of Abraham, from his Call to his Death.

T H E H I S T O R Y.

AFTER the Death of his Father *Terah, Abram*, A. M. 2083, &c. who, by God's Appointment, had not long before left *Ur in Chaldea*, was now order'd to leave *Haran*, and to go into a Country †, whereunto Ant. Chris. 1921, &c. God wou'd conduct him, and who, at the same Time, From Gen. xii-xxv. 11. gave him Assurance, that he wou'd bless, protect, and multiply Abraham leaves his Country.

† It is very probable, that this was done by some Appearance or other of the *Shekinah*, going before him, even as, afterwards, his Posterity was conducted in the Way thither; since, passing over Rivers, climbing Mountains, and travelling through a dangerous and vast Desart he had certainly need of an extraordinary divine Direction, and of some sensible Exhibition or Token of it, while he had nothing but the Promise of God to support him, in so long, and so hazardous a Journey. *Bibliotheca Bib. Vol. I.*

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii.--xxv. 11.

tiply his Posterity in an extraordinary Manner, and that †, *in his Seed, all the Families of the Earth shou'd be blessed.*

ABRAM was fully persuaded of the Truth of all God's Promises: And therefore, without any Hesitation, taking his Wife and Family, and all his Effects, together with his Nephew *Lot*, and *his* Substance with him, he pursu'd his Journey (*not knowing whither he shou'd go*) until, by the divine Guidance †, he came into the Land of *Canaan*; and, being minded

† Some Interpreters have imagin'd, that these Words require no higher Sense than this, — That all Nations shou'd see the Prosperity of *Abraham* and his Seed so evidently, that they shou'd bless themselves, and others, in some such Form as this: — *God make thee as great as Abraham and his Seed.* But, besides the Incongruity of supposing, that God's *everlasting Covenant* (as he calls it, Gen. xvii. 19.) was given only to produce a *proverbial* Form of Speech, 'tis plain Matter of Fact, that the Posterity of *Abraham*, in the Line of *Isaac*, was far from being the most prosperous (as to temporal Affairs) of all the other Branches of his Family; and therefore this Promise must of necessity be suppos'd to relate to some more *spiritual* and distant Blessing, just as *St. Paul*, in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, has explained it: *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made, he saith not, and to Seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ*, Gal. iii. 16. Vid. Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy.

† The Land of *Canaan* lies between the *Mediterranean-Sea* and the Mountains of *Arabia*, and extends from *Egypt* to *Phœnicia*. It is bounded to the *East*, by the Mountains of *Arabia*; to the *South*, by the Wilderness of *Param*, *Idumea*, and *Egypt*; to the *West*, by the *Mediterranean*, called, in *Hebrew*, the *Great Sea*; and to the *North*, by the Mountains of *Libanus*. Its Length from the City of *Dan* (since called *Cæsarea Philippi*, or *Paneadis*, which stands at the Foot of these Mountains) to *Beer-sheba*, is about seventy Leagues, and its Breadth, from the *Mediterranean-Sea* to the *Eastern* Borders, is, in some Places, thirty. It was first called the Land of *Canaan*, from *Cainan*, the Son of *Ham*, whose Posterity possessed it. It was afterwards called *Palestine*, from the People, which the *Hebrews* call *Philistines*, and the *Greeks* and *Romans* corruptly *Palesines*, who inhabited the *Sea-coasts*, and were first known to them. It likewise had the Name of the *Land of Promise*, from the Promise God made *Abraham* of giving it to him; that of the *Land of Israel*, from the *Israelites* having made themselves Masters of it; that of *Judah*, from the Tribe of *Judah*, which was the most considerable of the twelve; and lastly, the Happiness, it had of being sanctified by the Presence,

minded to make some Survey of the Country, proceeded † to the famous *Oak of Moreh*, not far from the City of *Sichem*, then || inhabited by the *Canaanites*. Here he took up his Abode for some Time, and here built an Altar, in order to pay

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii--xxv. II.

sence, Actions, Miracles, and Death of Jesus Christ, has given it the Name of the *Holy Land*, which it retains to this Day. *Lamy's* Introduction.

† The City of *Sichem*, or *Sechem*, or *Sychar*, (for it had all these Names) was, at this Time, so called by Way of *Anticipation*, (for, as yet, it was not founded) and is a Town of *Samaria*, in the Borders of *Ephraim*, which stands in a narrow Valley, between *Gerazim* on the *South*, and *Ebal* on the *North*, being built at the Foot of the former. At present it is called *Naplosa*, and consists only of two Streets, lying parallel under Mount *Gerazim*, and is far from being in the flourishing Condition, it was once, tho' it is still full of People, and the Seat of a *Bassa*. The true Name which was given it by *Abram*, was *Moreh*, or *Allon Moreh*, which our Translation renders the *Plain of Moreh*; by *St. Jerom*, the *illustrious Vale*; by the *Jerusalem Targum*, the *Valley of Vision*, because of God's appearing to *Abraham* here; and by others, the *Oak of Moreh*, or the illustrious Oak, &c. tho' it seems very probable, that there was in this Place, not only one single Tree, but a whole Grove of them, and therefore it is called *Allon*, or *Aulon*, being a Corruption from *Elon*, in *Latin Esculetum*; i. e. an *Oaken Grove*, or Forest of Ever-green Oaks: And since this was the Place, where *Abraham*, at his first Coming into the Country, built an *Altar*, we have great Reason to be of the same Opinion with the learned and sagacious *Mr Mede*, viz. that this *Allon-Moreh* was a Place of divine Worship, a *Proseucha*, or open Oratory, in Imitation of which, the *Jewish Proseuchæ* (which were certain Spaces of Ground, with an Altar in the midst, encompassed with a Wall, or some other Enclosure, and open above, but shaded with Trees) in after Ages, were set up. Vid. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, Vol. I. and *Biblioth. Bib.* Vol. I. Occas. Annot. 18, where the Reader may meet with a particular Enumeration, upon how many Accounts more, this Place was, in former Times, very famous.

|| The Words in the Text are,—*Abram passed through the Land unto the Place of Sichem, unto the Plain of Moreh, and the Canaanite was then in the Land*: From whence some have raised an Objection, that *Moses* could not be the Author of this Book of *Genesis*, because the Words seem to import, that the Writer of them lived after that the *Canaanites* were drove out of the Land, which was after *Moses's* Death. But, in answer to this, it may be observed, that, as by the *Land* here, we are not obliged to understand the whole Country, but only that *Part* of it, which lay

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xiii—xxv.
xi.

pay his Devotions to God; who, pleas'd with his Behaviour, appear'd to him again (as he had done at *Haran* before) and gave him fresh Assurances of his Favour, and a Promise inviolable, that, in Process of Time, the whole Land, where he then dwelt, shou'd be the Portion of his Posterity.

Goes into
Egypt.

FROM *Sichem* he remov'd † into the mountainous Country, which lies between *Beth-el* and *Hai*, where he likewise built an Altar for a Place of divine Worship (as he did in all other Countries where he came) and from *Beth-el*, he was travelling farther to the *South*, when he was stopp'd by a Famine, which grew grievous in the Land, and oblig'd him to go down to * *Egypt*, the only Place for Provision in

about *Sichem*, so by the *Canaanite*, we need not mean the whole Posterity of *Canaan*, or all the *Canaanitish* Tribes, but only one particular Tribe of them, as in the very next Chapter, Ver. 7. is more distinctly expressed. And the Reason, why this is taken notice of by the sacred Historian, is best accounted for in that antient Tradition in *Epiphanius*, [Hæres. 66. N. 84.] if we will allow it to be true, viz. that, according to the original Settlement and Distribution among the Sons of *Noah*, *Palestine* was not allotted to any of the Sons of *Ham*, but was usurped by *Canaan* from the Children of *Shem*, to whom it did of Right belong; so that these Words, *the Canaanite was then in the Land*, signify, that they had already invaded the Land, before *Abram* came thither, and therefore God's promising to give it him was only in order to restore that to the Posterity of *Shem*, which the Children of *Ham* had wrongfully seized. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Biblioth. Bib.* Vol. I.

† What our Author here means, is Mount *Ephraim*, which lay between *Beth-el*, a Town not far from *Jerusalem*, Northwards, and *Hai*, which is situate towards the *West* of *Beth-el*. *Wells's Geography*, Vol. I.

* *Josephus* tells us, that, "*Abraham*, understanding that there was
" a great Plenty in *Egypt*, resolv'd upon a Journey thither; not
" only to partake of their Plenty, but also to consult the Priests
" in their Profession in divine Matters, with an impartial De-
" sire and Disposition to find out the Truth, and either to give,
" or receive Satisfaction, according as the Subject in Question
" did require; that here he gained himself infinite Credit, not
" only for the Solidity of his Judgment, and an admirable Feli-
" city of Elocution, but for his instructive Talent of informing,
" and convincing his Hearers at once; and that here he read
" Lectures of *Astronomy* and *Arithmetick*, which the *Egyptians*
" understood nothing of, until *Abraham* brought them with
" him,

in such like Exigences. But as he came to the Confines of *Egypt*, he began to be not a little uneasy upon the Account of his Wife, who, (tho' she had pass'd the sixty-fifth Year of her Age) retain'd still Beauty enough to endanger the Man's Life, who shou'd pass for her Husband in that Country. And therefore, after some Deliberation, concluding, that the safest Way wou'd be for her to conceal her Marriage, he took an Opportunity to acquaint her with his Fears, and, with a small Entreaty, prevail'd with her, in all Places where they were to sojourn, to go under the Notion of his *Sister*.

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

THEY had not been long in *Egypt*, before *Abram*'s Fears were found to be true. His Wife's Charms had captivated several, and her Beauty was become the common Topick of Conversation; insomuch that, in a short Time, it reach'd the Court, and the high Commendations, which every one gave the King of it, rais'd his Curiosity to see this amiable Stranger. Immediately therefore she was brought to Court, and taken in to the King's Apartment, as design'd for one of his Royal *Concubines*; while her pretended Brother was treated with great Civility for her Sake, and loaded with many valuable Presents from the King.

IT is hardly to be imagin'd, what a sad Distress both the Patriarch and his Consort must have been in, upon this Occasion. She was a beautiful Woman, in the Power of a loose and vicious Prince, and destitute of all Protection, but God's; and her Lord not so much as daring to own her his Wife, knowing how certain and sudden must be the Destruction of an helpless Man, that provokes Passion and Power, Rage of Lust, and Security of gratifying it.

WHILE Matters were in this dangerous Position, the Providence of God interpos'd in her Behalf, and, to deter † *Pharaoh* and his Nobles from any dishonourable Attempts

A 3

upon

“ him out of *Chaldee* into *Egypt*, from whence they pass'd into “ *Greece*.” Antiq. l. 1. c. 9.

† *Pharaoh* was the common Name for all the *Egyptian* Kings, for above 3300 Years (as *Josephus* tells us, Antiq. l. 8. c. 2.) but what its proper *Etymology* is, the Learned are not so well agreed. *Bochart* thinks, that the Word *Pharaoh* signifies a *Crocodile*, and that *Ezekiel* alludes to it in these Words. *Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh, King of Egypt, the great Dragon, that lieth in the midst of the River*, Ezek. xxix. 3. M. *Le Clerc* fancies, that the *Arabick* Word *Pharaoh*, to be raised on high, or to be superior to, is the true Root of the Name. *Kircher* does indeed derive the

the

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

upon her Virtue, † infested them with such Plagues, as made them not insensible upon whose Account it was that they suffered ; even upon her's, who, tho' she passed for a *single*, was in reality a married Woman : So that the King, immediately calling for *Abram*, expostulated with him the ill Consequences, that might have ensu'd from the Method he had taken ; and, after some few Exprobations, returned him his Wife, and gave Orders, that they might safely depart his Kingdom, without any the least Molestation, either to their Persons, or Possessions.

Upon his
Return, he
and Lot
part.

ABRAM, after this, tarried not long in *Egypt* : For, understanding that the Famine was ceas'd in *Canaan*, he returned thither by the same Way, and on the Altar, which he had built before, offer'd a Sacrifice of Thanks for his happy Escape, and safe Return. *Lot* and *Abram* had hitherto liv'd together ; but, by this Time, their Substance was so much increas'd, that they found it inconvenient to be any longer near one another. Their Cattle mingled ; † their

the Word from the same Root, but will have it to signify *to deliver*, or *to free* ; and that *Pharaoh* therefore signifies *to be exempt* from the Jurisdiction of the Laws. And (to name no more) the learned *Renaudot* thinks, that *Pharaoh* is the same with the *Egyptian Pourro*, or *Pooro*, which signifies a *King*. *Calmet* on the Word.

† Some of the *Hebrew* Interpreters think, that they had grievous Ulcers in their secret Parts, which made both him and them incapable of enjoying either her, or any other Woman : And, in the Punishment inflicted upon *Abimelech*, and his People, upon the same Account, *Gen. xx. 18.* they suppose, that there were such Swellings in their privy Parts, as that the Men could neither enjoy their Wives, nor the Women, who were with Child, be delivered. *Patrick's* Commentary.

† The *Jews* here tell us, that the Herdsmen of *Abraham* were commanded by their *Master* not to go near the *Canaanites*, or the *Perizzites*, nor to come into the Grounds, which they had taken, either for Culture or Pasturage, that so they might not appear to do the least Injury to any of them ; and that, in Obedience to his Command, they took especial Care to confine all their Cattle, and to watch their Flocks with a strict Eye, that none might go astray, and so trespass upon the Natives ; but that *Lot's* Herdsmen were herein very negligent, and suffered their Cattle to go beyond their Bounds, and to feed in the Fields, which belonged to the *Canaanites*, and *Perizzites*, who dwelt then in the Land, and claimed the Sovereignty of it. *Bibliotheca Bibl. Vol. I.*

their Herdsmen quarrell'd; and their Flocks, when together, requir'd a larger Tract of Ground, to feed and support them, than they cou'd take up, without interfering with the Property of the Inhabitants of the Land, wherein they sojourn'd. Upon these Considerations, *Abram* resolv'd, in a friendly Manner, to separate from *Lot*; and, having given him his Choice of the whole Country, that lay before him, *Lot* chose the fertile and pleasant Plains of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, † which he saw were well watered by the Streams

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
II.

A 4

of

† The Words in the Text are these,—*The Plain of Jordan was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrhah (even like the Garden of the Lord, like the Land of Egypt) as thou goest to Zoar.* The last Clause, *as thou goest to Zoar*, has much perplexed Commentators, whilst they refer it to the Land of *Egypt*, in the Clause immediately preceding; whereas, if what is said by Way of Comparison of the Plain of *Jordan* to the Garden of the Lord, *i. e.* the Garden of *Eden*, and to the Land of *Egypt*, be understood as inserted by way of *Parenthesis*, the Difficulty will be taken away, and the Import of the last Clause will be plain and easy; for then the Meaning of the Verse will amount to this,—“That, before the Lord “destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, the Plain of *Jordan* was well “watered every where, as thou comest unto *Zoar*,” *i. e.* in the Parts where *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* stood, or, in short, in the Vale of *Siddim*. But there is another Interpretation, which supposes the Word *Zoar* to be a false Reading for *Zoan*, a City, that was once the *Capital of Egypt*, situate at the lower Part of the River *Nile*, where it divides itself into several Branches, and so waters the Country more plentifully thereabouts, than in any other Part. According to which Reading, the Import of the Verse will be this,—That *the Plain of Jordan was well watered every where about Sodom and Gomorrhah, before the Lord destroyed them; yea, the Plain was so well watered, that it was, in this respect, as the Garden of Eden, or as the Land of Egypt, and particularly as thou goest to Zoan, i. e. in the Parts about Zoan, where the Nile is divided into several Branches.* Wells's Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. I. The River *Jordan*, which runs thro' this Plain, is of so great Note in the sacred Writings, that we must not pass it by without this Observation,—That it derives its Name (as some assert) from the Hebrew Word *Jor*, which signifies a *Spring*, and *Dan*, which is a small Town, near the Source of this River. But the Misfortune is, that the Name of *Dan* is much more modern, than that of *Jordan*. From its Source, which we suppose to be at *Cæsarea Philippi*, it runs thro' a Space of about 50 Leagues, till it discharges itself into the Dead-

A. M. of *Jordan*, and so parted from his Uncle. *Abram* continuing, for some Time, in the Place where *Lot* had left him, Ant. Chris. had a Vision imparted to him, wherein God was pleased to 1921, &c. renew the Promise of enlarging his Posterity; and, bidding From Gen. him cast his Eyes round the Horizon, confirm'd the Gift of xii—xv. all the Land, which he beheld, to him and his Posterity. II.  Not long after this, he left *Beth-el*, and went to dwell at † the *Oak of Mamre*, which is not far from *Hebron*, where he built an Altar unto the Lord, and, in a short Time, contracted an Acquaintance with three of the greatest Men there, *Mamre*, *Aner*, and *Escol*; the first of whom communicated his Name to all the Country.

Vanquishee This Alliance prov'd very serviceable to him, but more Chedorlaomer's Army. especially upon the following Occasion. † *Chedorlaomer*, King

Dead-Sea, otherwise called the *Asphaltite Lake*, where *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the other Cities of the Plain, that were destroyed with Fire from Heaven, once stood. About five or six Leagues Distance from its Spring, it forms the Lake *Semechon*, and from thence it enters the Lake of *Tiberias*; passes quite thro' it, and so is lost in the *Dead-Sea*. Its Water, in Summer-time, is very shallow; but, about the Time of the Barley-harvest, or the Feast of the *Passover*, it constantly overflows its Banks, and greatly fructifies the Plain. *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† What we translate the *Plain*, should be rendered, the *Oak of Mamre*; because the Word *Elon* signifies an *Oak*, or Tree of long Duration: *Sozomen* tells us, that this Tree was still extant, and famous for Pilgrimages, and annual Feasts, even in *Constantine's* Time; that it was about six Miles distant from *Hebron*; that some of the Cottages, which *Abraham* built, were still standing near it; and that there was a Well likewise of his digging, whereunto both *Jews*, *Christians*, and *Heathens*, did, at certain Seasons, resort, either out of Devotion, or for Trade; because there was held a great Mart. As for *Hebron*, or *Chebron*, it was accounted one of the most antient Cities in the World; having been built seven Years before *Tanis*, the Capital of *Lower Egypt*. It was situated upon an Eminence, Twenty Miles Southward from *Jerusalem*, and Twenty Miles North from *Beer-sheba*, and had its Name, very probably, from the Word *Chavar*, to couple, or join; because these married Couples, *Abraham* and *Sarah*, *Isaac* and *Rebecca*, *Jacob* and *Leah* were buried there. *Calmet's Dictionary*, and *Universal History* in the Notes, l. i. c. 7.

† We meet no where in profane History with the Name of *Chedorlaomer*, nor with any of those Names of the Kings, that were confederate with him: And the Reason hereof is, that *Ctesias*, (from whom the profane Historians took the Names of these

King of *Elam*, had held five petty Princes in a tributary Subjection to him for some Years, of which Number the King of *Sodom* was one. At length they shook off their Yoke, and confederated against him; which provoked him (in Conjunction with three other Kings, his Allies) to march directly with a powerful Army against them. The revolted Kings, seeing the Enemy drawing towards them, took the Field with a Resolution to try the Fate of a *pitch'd* Battle. The Valley of *Siddim* was the Place where the Armies were to meet, and, as it was full of Pits of *Bitumen*, it might have made the Engagement more difficult and dangerous to the Enemies Horse: But so it was, † that the five Kings were put to the Rout; one Part of their Army was cut in Pieces, and the other fled to the neighbouring Mountains, leaving their Cities a Prey to the Conquerors. *Lot*, who, at this Time, resided at *Sodom*, was involv'd in the Calamity of the City; was plundered of all he had, and himself carried away among the rest of the Captives. As soon as *Abram* had Intelligence of this by an express Messenger, he immediately sends to his three Friends, desiring their Assistance at this critical Juncture; and, putting himself at the Head of three Hundred and eighteen of his own Domesticks, all well prepar'd, and Men of Resolution, he began his Pursuit,

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
II.

these Kings) did not use their original *Affyrian* Names in his History, but rather such as he found in the *Persian* Records. However, since the Date of this Transaction falls four Years before the Death of *Ninyas*, there are good Grounds to infer, that *Ninyas*, who then lived in *Persia*, was the *Chedorlaomer* of *Moses*, at that Time the Head of the *Affyrian* Monarchy; that *Amraphel* was his Deputy at *Babylon* in *Shinar*; and *Arioch* and *Tidal* his Deputies over some other adjacent Countries: For it is remarkable, that *Ninyas* was the first, who appointed under him such *Deputies*; nor is there any Absurdity in *Moses* to call them *Kings*, since it is observable, from what *Isaiah* hinted afterwards, (Ch. x. 8.) that the *Affyrian* boasted his Deputy-princes to be equal to royal Governors, *Are not my Princes altogether Kings?* *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 6.

† As the Text tells us, that the Kings of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* fell into some of the *Slime-pits*, with which the Valley of *Siddim* abounds, and takes no Notice of their coming out of them, it is more rational to suppose, that they perished there, than that *Abraham* stayed to take them up, as the *Jews* vainly imagine; and that therefore the King of *Sodom*, who afterwards came out to congratulate *Abram*, must have been the Son of the Deceased.

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xiv.
11.

suit, and, after a March of almost seventy Leagues, coming up with the Enemy, and dividing his Forces into small Parties, he fell upon them by Night, and, charging them on all Sides at once, put them in such a Terror and Consternation, that they took to their Heels, and fled, leaving all the Booty and Captives behind them, among whom he happily recovered *Lot*, and brought him back with all his Substance to his former Habitation.

Is congratulated here-upon.

THE first Person, who came to congratulate *Abram* upon this Victory, was the King of *Sodom*, (very probably the Son of him, (a) who perished in the Slime-pits) who, in thankful Acknowledgment of the Benefits he had received from his Valour and Assistance, offered him all the Booty, which he had retaken, and desir'd only his Subjects, the Prisoners, to be restor'd. But *Abram* was too generous to take the Advantage of the Misery of War; and therefore, saving to his *Confederates* such a Proportion of the Plunder, as, by the Law of Arms, belonged to them, he returned all the rest, both *Prisoners* and *Goods*, to the King of *Sodom*, having before resolved to keep no Part of them, that it might be said, he undertook that Enterprize, not for any private Advantage, but purely for the *publick Good*, which every Man of Honour should have always *primarily* in his View.

THE next, who congratulated him upon this Occasion, was *Melchizedeck*, King of *Salem*; who, upon his Return from the Battle, had provided Plenty of all Things necessary for his Refreshment, and his Men's in their March; and, as he was a *Priest*, as well as King, he both blessed *Abram*, for being the Instrument of so publick a Deliverance in the Hands of God, and God himself who had given such uncommon Success to his Arms; whereupon *Abram*, in Return, presented him with the *tenth Part* of the Spoils, which he had taken from the Enemy in this Expedition.

ABRAM's Deportment, upon this Occasion, was so very acceptable to God, that he was pleas'd to appear to him again in a Vision, and to give him fresh Assurances of his special Favour, and of his Intention to be *his Shield of Defence*, in all Dangers, and, for all the good Acts, which he perform'd, *his exceeding great Reward*.

Is promis'd a Son.

HITHERTO indeed the Patriarch had listen'd to God's Promises, without any Expression of Distrust; but, upon this fresh Assurance,

(a) Gen. xiv. 10.

Assurance, he ventured, for the first Time, to expostulate with him, not knowing how these things possibly could be accomplish'd, whilst himself continu'd *Childless*, and, to all Appearance, must be obliged to leave the Bulk of his Substance to *Eliezar*, his Household Steward. This indeed was a modest Way to try whether God designed to bless him with a Child; and God did not leave him long in Suspence. He told him, that not his Servant, but a Son of his own, begotten of his Body, should be his Heir, and should have a Race, descending from him, as *innumerable as the Stars*.

THIS was such joyful News, as gave *Abram* fresh Courage, even to request of God some sensible and visible Token, whereby he might be assur'd of this Blessing; And accordingly God was pleas'd to comply with his Request. That therefore they might enter into a formal Covenant upon this Occasion, he ordered him to take an *Heifer*, a *Goat*, and a *Ram*, of three Years old each, with a *Pigeon* and a *Turtle-dove*, and to offer them up. *Abram* did as he was ordered: And, having killed the four-footed Beasts, he † cut them in two, and laid the Halves,

At M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1021, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

Enters into
Covenant
with God.

† The only Place, besides this, where we have any Intimation given us of this Custom of making Covenants, by dividing the Beasts then to be sacrificed, and by the Parties, who covenanted, passing between the Parts of the Beast so divided, is in *Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19.* *I will give the Men, that have transgressed my Covenant, which have not performed the Words of my Covenant, which they had made before me, when they cut the Calf in twain, and passed between the Parts thereof; the Princes of Judah, and the Princes of Jerusalem, the Eunuchs, and the Priests, and all the People of the Land, which passed between the Parts of the Calf; I will even give them into the Hand of their Enemies, and into the Hand of them, that seek their Life; and their dead Bodies shall be for Meat unto the Fowls of the Heaven, and unto the Beasts of the Earth.* This certainly was a very ancient Custom: And, accordingly, we find in *Homer*, that *ὅρκια πικρὰ τομώεις* is a very common Phrase, upon which his Commentator, *Eustathius*, has this Observation: *Διὰ τομῆς ζώων θυομένων οἱ ἐπὶ μεγάλοις ὅρκοι ἡγίνοντο*, that in Matters of great Moment, Oaths, or Covenants, were generally made by dividing the Animals, which, upon such Occasions, were sacrific'd; and the Design of this Rite (as the learned *Mede*, in a Discourse upon the Subject, has express'd it) was as much as to say, *Thus let me be divided, and cut in Pieces, if I violate the Oath, which I have now made in the Presence of God.* *Patrick's and Le Clerc's Commentaries.*

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

Halves, at proper Diſtances, directly oppoſite to each other, but the Fowls he left whole; and ſo, paſſing between the diſſected Bodies, (as the Manner of Covenanting then was) he made his ſolemn Vows of perpetual Obedience to God; and then ſitting down, in Expectance of what God would do on his Part, he took Care to drive away all Birds of Prey from ſettling upon the Sacrifice.

As ſoon as the Sun began to ſet, a deep Sleep, * attended with an horrible Darkneſs, and Dread of Spirits, fell upon him; during which, it was revealed to him, that he was not to expect an immediate Accompliſhment of the divine Promiſes; for tho' † himſelf was to die in Peace, and in a good

* That Horror and Dread of Spirits do frequently ſeize on thoſe, who ſee Viſions, is evident from what *Daniel* tells us of himſelf, *I was left alone, and ſaw this great Viſion, and there remained no Strength in me; for my Comelineſs was turned in me into Corruption, and I retained no Strength: [Ch. x. 8.]* but the Deſcription which we have in *Job* of this Matter, is, in itſelf, very awful and affecting. *In Thoughts from the Viſions of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth on Men, Fear came upon me, and Trembling, which made all my Bones to ſhake. Then a Spirit paſſed before my Face, the Hair of my Fleſh ſtood up. It ſtood ſtill, but I could not diſcern the Form thereof; an Image was before mine Eyes, there was Silence, and I heard a Voice, Ch. iv. 13. &c.*

† The Expreſſion in the Text is, *Thou ſhalt go to thy Fathers in Peace*, which ſome will have to be no more, than an Oriental Phraſe for going to the Grave; but, ſince it cannot be ſaid of *Abraham*, that he did, in this Senſe, *go to his Fathers* (for as much as his Body was ſo far from being laid with them in the Sepulchre, that it was depoſited in a Country, that had no Manner of Communication with that of his Fathers) it muſt be allowed, that, from this Text, an Argument may juſtly be drawn for the ſeparate Exiſtence of human Souls. The Expreſſion however, of *going to our Fathers*, ſeems to have been formed from ſome ſuch Notion as this, — That the Souls of the Deceaſed do go to a certain Place, where thoſe of the ſame Family, or ſame Nation at leaſt, are ſuppoſed to live together, and in Communion: which Notion certainly ariſes from that natural Deſire, which all Men, who think their better Part immortal, have to ſee and conſerve with ſuch of their Relations or Countrymen, as have left behind them a great and laſting Fame. For, if the Soul of *Socrates*, ſays one, were permitted to go where it deſired, it would certainly aſſociate with the Worthies of *Greece*, with *Orpheus*, *Muſæus*, *Homer*,

good old Age, yet his Posterity were, after that, to sojourn, and be afflicted in a strange Country, † for the Space of four hundred Years; at the Expiration of which, God would punish their Oppressors, and conduct them safe to the Land, which he had promis'd them. And, for his Confirmation in this, he caus'd the Symbol of his divine Presence, viz. † a smoaking Furnace, and a burning Lamp, to pass between the divided Pieces of the Victims, and consume them, in Ratification of his Part of the Covenant.

A. M.
2083, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1921, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xv.
11.

TEN Years had *Sarai* expected the Performance of God's Promise, and judging now, by the Course of Nature, that her

Has a Son by Hagar.

Homer, and those antient Demi-gods, who, in their several Generations, were so renowned. Vid. *Le Clerc's Commentary*, and *Biblioth. Bib.* Vol. I. in *Locum*.

† Expositors have been very much divided in their Opinions, how to make it out, that *Abraham's* Posterity was in a State of Servitude and Affliction for the Space of *four hundred Years*: It may be observed however, that all this Difficulty is removed, if we suppose, that their State of Affliction is to be reckoned from the Time of *Isaac's* Birth, which, to the Deliverance out of the *Egyptian* Bondage, was just *four hundred and five Years*; but the *five* odd Years are therefore not mentioned, because it is a common Custom among all Writers, to take no Notice of *broken Numbers*, (as they call them) when they name a *round Sum*. And, if there be supposed a farther Difficulty, in that their Sojourning is (in *Exod.* xii. 40.) said to have continu'd *four hundred and thirty Years*; in these Years, the Time of *Abraham's* sojourning (which was exactly twenty-five Years, from his Coming into the Land of *Canaan* to the Birth of *Isaac*) may be comprehended, and then all the Difficulty vanishes; because these *twenty-five* Years, added to the *four hundred and five* before mentioned, exactly make up the *four hundred and thirty*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† By this Symbol God design'd to represent to *Abraham* either the future State of his Posterity, the *smoaking Furnace* signifying *Israel's* Misery in the Land of *Egypt*, and the *burning Lamp*, their happy Escape and Deliverance; or (what seems more probable) to notify his own immediate Presence, since both *Smoke* and *Fire* are, in several Parts of Scripture, mention'd, as *Emblems* and *Representations* of the *divine Appearance*. And therefore, as it was a Thing customary, and especially in *Chaldea* (from whence *Abraham* came) for Persons, covenanting together, to *pass* between the *Pieces* of the Sacrifice; so God, who had no Body to do it *visibly* for him, did it in this *Type* and *Emblem*. *Pool's Annot.* and *Bibliotheca Bib.* in *Loc.*

A. M. 2083, *Ec.*
 Ant. Chris. 1921, *Ec.*
 From Gen. xii—xxv.
 11.

her Husband's Issue must proceed from some other Woman, and not from her own Body, she prevail'd with him to take her Handmaid † *Hagar* to be his *secondary* Wife, pleasing herself with the Thoughts, that, if her Maid shou'd conceive by her Husband, the Child would be reputed hers, and her House be establish'd in the Completion of the divine Promise.

It was not long before *Hagar* accordingly did conceive ; and, forgetting now the former Condition of her Life, she began to value herself upon it, and to treat her Mistress with Insolence and ill Manners. *Sarai*, impatient to see herself insulted by a Slave, cou'd not forbear breaking out into bitter Complaints against her to her Husband ; but he, willing to make her easy, and withal to discountenance any disrespectful Carriage towards her, left her to treat her Maid just as she pleas'd. This Licence gave *Sarai* an Opportunity of expressing her Resentment with too much Severity, which the other, not able to bear, she stole from her Master's House, and was making the best of her Way to her own Country, which was *Egypt* ; when, in her Travels thro' the Wilderness, meeting with a Fountain, she tarried to rest, and refresh herself there. As she was revolving her Sorrows in her Mind, an Angel came to her, and, after some previous Questions, advis'd her to return Home, and be subject to her Mistress, because it wou'd not be long before she shou'd be delivered of a Son (whom he order'd her to Name † *Ishmael*) whose Posterity wou'd be very numerous, a stout and warlike People living upon Plunder in the Desarts, and apt to annoy others, tho' not easily vanquished themselves.

HAGAR,

† In *Concubinage*, these *secondary*, or Wives of a lower Order, were accounted *lawful* and *true* Wives ; had an equal Right to the Marriage-bed with the chief Wife, and their Issue was reputed as *legitimate* ; but, in all other respects, they were inferior. And, as they had no Authority in the Family, nor any Share in Household Government ; so, if they had been *Servants* in the Family, before they came to be *Concubines*, they continued in that State afterwards, and in the same Subjection to their Mistresses, as before. *Howel's History of the Bible.*

† *Ishmael* is compounded of the Words *Jishmag* and *El*, the Lord *bath*, or the Lord *will bear* : And the Reason of the Name is immediately subjoined by the Angel, namely, *because the Lord bath heard her Complaint.*

HAGAR, hearing this comfortable News, was soon persuaded to take the Angel's Advice, and, in Memory of this surprizing Vision, having call'd first the Fountain where she sat *Beer-lahai-roi*, which signifies, *the Well of him that lives and sees me*, she made what haste she cou'd Home, and, in a short Time after her Return, was deliver'd of a Son, according to the Angel's Promise.

AT the Birth of *Ishmael*, *Abram* was 86 Years old; and, left, in the Excess of his Joy, he should mistake this Child for the Heir of the Promises, which had been made to him, about thirteen Years after, God renew'd his Covenant with him; instituted the Rite of Circumcision upon a severe Penalty; changed † his Name from *Abram* to *Abraham*, and his Wife's from *Sarai* to † *Sarah* (where the Difference in Sense is much more, than in Sound) and, (to compleat his Happiness) gave him a Promise, that his Wife *Sarah* should bear a Son. This seem'd a Thing so strange, and almost impossible, that *Abraham*, falling on his Face, began to intercede for the Life and Preservation of *Ishmael*, as thinking it unreasonable to ask, or wish for any Thing more; but the Almighty soon assur'd him, that these great Blessings were not design'd for *Ishmael*, but for a Son to be born of the once-barren *Sarah*, (and therefore to be named † *Isaac*) which would certainly come to pass within the

Compafs

† *Abram* is compounded of two Hebrew Words, *Ab*, and *Ram*, which signify *high Father*; and *Abraham* is commonly derived from three, namely, *Ab-Ram-Hamon*, *the Father of a great Multitude*. But this is forced and ungrammatical, having nothing to support it, but only the Reason, which God gives in the Text, for changing *Abram* into *Abraham*, viz. because he was to make of him *a Father of many Nations*, as indeed he was; for not only the twelve Tribes, but the *Ishmaelites*, the *Edomites*, and all the Posterity of *Keturah*, descended from his Loins.

† *Sarai* signifies *my Princess*, or Princess of my Family only; but *Sarah*, the Name now given her, denotes *a Princess indefinitely*, and at large, according to the Prediction concerning her, *a Mother (or Princess) of many Nations shall she be, and Kings of People shall come of her*, Gen. xvii. 16.

† *Isaac*, or, according to the Hebrew, *Ischack*, signifies *he or she has, or shall laugh*; and this Name *Sarah* gave him, because, when the Angel promis'd that she shou'd become a Mother, tho' she was not of an Age to have Children, she privately laugh'd at the Prediction, and, when the Child was born, she said, *God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me*, Gen. xxi. 6. *Calmet's Dictionary.*

A. M.
2107, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1897, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

Compass of a Year. That he might not however seem wholly to neglect his Request for *Ishmael*, he promis'd to make him a great Nation, and the Father of *twelve Princes*; tho' the Son begotten of *Sarah* shou'd only be entitled to the Covenant and Promise of *making all the Nations of the Earth blessed*. This was the Purport of the Vision; and, as soon as it was ended, *Abraham* delayed not (according to the divine Command) to circumcise himself, his Son, and all the Males in his Family; an Ordinance, which the *Hebrews* have ever since observed very religiously.

Is visited by the Angels. ABRAHAM continu'd still to dwell at *Mamre*; and, as he was sitting, one Day, at the Door of his Tent, he espied three Persons, whom he took to be Travellers, coming towards him. He therefore went out to meet them; and having, in a very civil and respectful Manner, invited them to take a small Refreshment with him, (which they consented to) he immediately gave Orders for an Entertainment to be made ready, † which accordingly was serv'd in, and himself waited at the Table, under the Cover of a shady Oak.

WHILE they sat at Table, † one of the Guests, enquiring after *Sarah*, and being told, that she was in the Tent,

† The Scripture informs us, Gen. xviii. 8. *that Abraham took Butter and Milk, and the Calf, (i. e. the choicest Parts of the Calf) and set it before them, and they did eat*: Where the Eating of these Angels must be understood, according to the Nature of the Bodies, we may suppose them to have assum'd. If their Bodies were *aërial*, their Eating must have been in Appearance only; if *substantial*, their Eating might have been real, *i. e.* they might have receiv'd the Meat into their Bodies, which, afterwards, by a divine Power, was consum'd there. *Pool's* Annot. and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† It is very observable, that one of these Angels (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* calls them, Ch. xiii. 2.) appear'd more honourable, and superior to the other two, and therefore *Abraham* makes his Address to him as the *Chief*, and the Historian styles him *Jehovah*, which the Generality both of *Jews* and *Christians* do look upon, as the *incommunicable* Name of God; and therefore it is believ'd by the far greatest Part of the *latter*, that it was the *Son of God*, who appear'd in that Form. There are others however (particularly some *modern* ones) who maintain, that it was no more than an *Angel*, who spoke to him in the Person of God; tho' it hardly seems probable, either that *Moses* should call an *Angel* by *that Name*, or that *Abraham* should

Tent, he then address'd himself to *Abraham*, and assur'd him, that he had still in Remembrance the Case of his Wife *Sarah*, who, at the End of the Year, shou'd certainly have a Son. *Sarah*, who was listening at the Tent-door, and thought herself far enough past Child-bearing, † could not refrain from laughing within herself; and when the Stranger ask'd the Reason of it, with such a serious Air, as struck her with Terror, and she endeavour'd to deny it, he dismiss'd her with this gentle Reproof—That it was highly wrong in her to mistrust what he had said unto her, since *nothing was impossible with God*.

UPON this, the Conversation ceased, and the three heavenly Guests rising up to proceed on their Journey, *Abraham* very courteously attended them some Part of the Way. Their Way lay towards *Sodom*, whither two of the Guests advanc'd with more Haste, but the third, continuing with *Abraham*, began to reveal a most dreadful Secret, viz. That the Iniquity of *Sodom*, and the other neighbouring Cities, was come to such a prodigious Height, that he was now going down with an Intent to destroy them, * if, upon Enquiry,

A. M.
2107, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1897, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

*The Wicked-
ness of So-
dom and
Gomorrah.*

should intercede with him, as he does, when he saith, *That be far from thee, to destroy the Good with the Wicked: Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Or that an Angel should peremptorily say, *If I find forty righteous Men in the Place, for their Sakes I will not destroy it*. So that the most probable Opinion, is, that it was *Christ* himself, who is *emphatically* called *the Judge of all the Earth*. Universal History. The Jews however have a Maxim, that no *Angel performs two Ministries*, or is sent upon two Messages at once; and therefore they think, that these three Angels (as they suppose them) were dispatch'd for different Purposes; one of them, who was the *Chief*, to bring a Confirmation of the Birth of *Isaac*; another, to conduct *Lot* safe out of *Sodom*; and the third, to overthrow the Cities of the Plain: And therefore when one of them had deliver'd his Message to *Abraham*, there were but two, that held on their Course to *Sodom*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† In the preceding Chapter (Ver. 17.) we read that *Abraham* laughed upon the same Occasion, and yet was not reprov'd; but the Difference of their Conduct might be this, That *Abraham* laughed for Joy upon hearing the glad Tidings of a Son, but *Sarah's* Laughter proceeded from a Spirit of Distrust and Infidelity. *Pool's Annotations*.

* Here is a wonderful Instance of God's Patience and Goodness, who, tho' he knew all without Enquiry, yet would not

A. M.
2107, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1897, &c.
From Gen.
xii—xxv.
11.

Enquiry, he found their Abominations equal to the Report of them. This Condeſcenſion of God, in communicating his Deſign to *Abraham*, gave him Encouragement to make Interceſſion for the wicked Inhabitants of theſe Cities, which, in ſix *petitionary* Propoſitions, he manag'd ſo well, as, by a gradual Decrease of the Number every Time, to bring him at laſt to a Conceſſion, that if *even ten* juſt Perſons were found in *Sodom* he would not deſtroy it: And with this conditional Promiſe he left *Abraham*.

In the mean Time, the two other Gueſts, (who (as we ſaid) went before, and were indeed the *miniſtring Angels*, whom God had appointed to execute his Judgments upon the *Sodomites*) held on their Courſe towards the City, where they arrived in the Evening, when *Lot* was ſitting in the Gate. As ſoon as he ſaw them, he roſe up to meet them, and, after proper Salutations, † invited them to his Houſe

condemn even the moſt flagitious, without good Examination and Tryal. Before the *Flood*, God proceeded againſt the old World upon ocular Evidence; God ſaw that the *Wickedneſs of Man was great*, Gen. vi. 5, 12. At the Building of *Babel*, it is ſaid, that the Lord came down to ſee the City and the Tower, which the Children of Men had built, Gen. xi. 5. And now again, before the Deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, tho' the Cry againſt them was great, becauſe of the Grievouſneſs of their Sin, yet the Lord would not proceed againſt them upon common Fame; But I will go down, ſaith he, and ſee, whether they have done according to the Cry of it; and if not, I will know, Ch. xviii. 21. And hereupon we may obſerve, that the appearing of Gods, in the Manner of Strangers, to puniſh or reward Men, was a common Tradition among the *Heathens*.

Καί τε Θεοὶ ξείνοισιν ἐοικότες ἀλλοδαποῖσι

Πωλῖοισιν τελέθοντες, ἐπιγρῶσσι πολλῶς,

Ἀνθρώπων ὕβριν τε καὶ εὐνομίην ἐφορῶντες. Hom. Odyſſ. B.

† In the *Eastern* Countries of late indeed ſome few *Caravanſaries* have been ſet up, but in the Time, we are now ſpeaking of, there was no ſuch Thing as *Inns*, for the Accommodation of Strangers; and therefore all Travellers, when they came to a Town, if they were not entertain'd in a *private* Houſe, were forc'd to abide all Night in the *Streets*. It was therefore a cuſtomary Thing for thoſe of the better Sort to receive ſuch *Way-faring* Men (whether they knew them, or knew them not) into their Houſes, and there entertain them with great Civility. And this is the Reaſon, why, both in *ſacred* and *profane* Authors, we meet with ſuch large Commendations of this Act of

Hofpitality,

House to refresh and repose themselves that Night; which, at first, they declin'd, but afterwards, with some Importance, comply'd with. But, before it was Time to go to Rest, the Inhabitants of the City, both young and old, being inform'd that Lot had Strangers with him, and, in all Probability, tempted with the beautiful Forms which the Angels had assum'd, encompass'd the House, and demanded of him to deliver them up, † that they might abuse them.

LOT thinking, by mild and soft Words, to appease his outrageous Neighbours, steps out of the Door, and shutting it after him, intreats them to offer no Affront to his Guests; nay, rather than have the Laws of *Hospitality* violated, he offers to give up his two Virgin Daughters to their Discretion. But all would not do; they threaten to use him worse than his Guests, *a pragmatistical Stranger that pretended to controul them in any Thing!* and were pressing forward to break open the Door; when the two Angels, with more than human Strength, forced their Way out, took in their Host again, and then shutting the

B 2

Door,

Hospitality, and particularly in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* (Ch. xiii. 2.) have a Precept to this Effect, alluding to the very historical Passage now before us, *Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unawares.* *Le Clerc's Commentary.* Thus we read in *Homer*, that *Minerva*, coming in the Shape of *Mentor*, to make *Telemachus* a Visit

Στῆ δ' Ἰθάκης ἐνὶ δῆμῳ, ἐπὶ προθύροις Ὀδυσῆος

until he saw her, and thereupon went to her, and very kindly invited her in

εἶσι δ' Ἀθήνην.

Βῆ δ' ἰθὺς προθύροισι, νιμεσσῆθη δ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ

Ξεῖνον δευὰ θέρησιν ἐφέταμεν. ἐγγύθει δὲ γὰρ

Χεῖρ' ἔλεξε τεύχεον, — &c. *Odyss. A.*

† That is in an unnatural and preposterous Manner, which was afterwards expressly forbidden in the Law, *Levit. xviii. 22.* and thereby made capital, *Ch. xx. 13.* which vile Sin continu'd among the *Gentiles*, even in the *Apostle's* Time (as may be gather'd from *Rom. i. 27.* and *1 Cor. vi. 9.*) and was so generally practis'd among the People of *Sodom*, that from thence it took the Name of *Sodomy*, and the Practisers of it are call'd *Sodomites*, both in the Holy Scriptures, and our *English* Laws, which (as did the Law of God of old) do still make the Punishment of it to be Death. *Howell's History.*

A. M.
2107, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1897, &c.
From Gen.
xii--xxv. II.

Door, † struck all that were round it with Blindness, so that they were not able to find any more where it was.

WHILST they were thus groping about in vain, the two Angels acquainted *Lot* with their Commission; that their Errand was to execute the divine Vengeance upon that execrable Place; and therefore they advis'd him, if he had any Friends for whose Safety he was concern'd, that he wou'd immediately let them know their Danger, and warn them to depart in Time. *Lot* had no Relations, but only † two Sons-in-law, to whom his Daughters were contracted; but these, when he went to them early in the Morning, desiring them to go along with him, and leave that accursed Place, took the old Man to be crazy, or beside himself, and made a Banter and Ridicule of all that he said.

IN the Morning, as soon as it was Day, one of the Angels, observing *Lot* to linger (possibly to pack up some of his most valuable Goods) took him, his Wife and his two Daughters by the Hand, and carried them, in a Manner forcibly, out of the City, bidding them to flee for their Lives; and, lest they shou'd be involv'd in the common Ruin, to make the best of their Way to the Mountains. *Lot*, looking before him, and perceiving the Mountains to be at a good Distance, began to fear that he shou'd not be able to reach them in Time; and therefore intreated the Angel, that

† It is a probable Opinion, that these Men were struck, not with *actual* Blindness, but with a Dizziness, which disturb'd their Sight, and represented Objects falsely and in Confusion, in the same Manner, as the *Syrians* were, when sent to take *Elisba*, 2 Kings vi. 18. And this was no hard Matter for the Angels to do, by making a small Alteration, either in their Sight, or in the Air, whereby either the *Door* might appear to them like the *solid* Wall, or the several Parts of the *Wall* like so many Doors. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† Several Translators, as well as some *Rabbins*, suppose, that these were the Husbands of some other of *Lot's* Daughters, who were actually married, and had left their Father's House; which seems to be confirm'd by the Angels ordering him to take his Wife, and his two Daughters, that *were there present*: But the *original* Words, which in our Version are render'd, *his Sons-in-law*, which married his Daughters, may be translated, according to the Interpretation of *Onkelos*, *his Sons-in-law*, which were to marry, &c. the Contract having been pass'd, but the Marriage not consummated by Co-habitation. Universal History, l. 1. c. 4.

that he might be permitted to escape to a small City not far from *Sodom*, then called *Bela*, but afterwards *Zoar*, which he accordingly granted, and for his Sake spared the City; but then he urg'd them to be expeditious, and make all possible Haste thither, because they cou'd not begin to execute their Commission, until he was safely arriv'd.

WHAT the Angels enjoin'd them, at their Departure, was neither to tarry in the *Plain*, nor to look behind them. But, before they got to *Zoar*, so it was, that *Lot's Wife*, either out of Forgetfulness of the Prohibition, or out of Love to the Place of her Habitation, looking back, was turn'd into a Pillar of * *metallick Salt*, a lasting Monument of God's Vengeance on obstinate and unbelieving Offenders: And no sooner were the rest arriv'd at *Zoar*, but the angry Heavens began to pour down Showers of *liquid Fire* upon *Sodom and Gomorrah*, and the other wicked *Cities of the Plain*, which, within a short Time, so totally consumed them, that, when *Abraham*, the next Morning, looked towards the Country, he saw it all in a Smoak, like the Smoak of a large Furnace.

THE Judgment indeed was so very terrible, that *Lot*, not thinking himself safe at *Zoar*, withdrew to the Mountains, to which he was first directed, and, for want of Houses, liv'd there, with his two Daughters in a Cave, His Daugh-

B 3

ters

* It is not agreed by *Commentators*, what was the Crime, for which *Lot's Wife* was so severely punish'd. Some are of Opinion, that she deserv'd it, merely for disobeying the Commandment of the Angel, and expressing too much Concern for a People, that deserv'd no Compassion. Others say, that, being anxiously solicitous for her Daughters that were married there, and turning about to see, whether they follow'd her, she saw the divine *Shechinah*, or Majestick Appearance of God, descending to destroy the Place, which was the Occasion of her *Metamorphosis*. Others suppose, that, being in Confederacy with the *Sodomites*, she told them that her Husband was *distracted*, and gave them Notice, when any Strangers came to lodge with him, by a Sign of Smoak by Day, and of Fire by Night; whilst others again imagine, that the Scripture does not represent the Fate, which she met with; as a Punishment for any Crime, but as a Thing merely accidental. Universal History, l. i. c. 4. There is one Circumstance however in the Text, *viz.* that *she looked from behind her Husband*, whom she follow'd, which seems to be mention'd, as the Reason of this her Presumption, because she could do it without her Husband's Observation or Reproof; to which she seems to have had a greater Regard, than to the all seeing Eye of God. *Pool's* Annotations.

A. M.
2107, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1897, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.

ters had lost their espoused Husbands in *Sodom*, and, now despairing of having any *other*, they plotted together to deceive their Father, and have Issue by him. The Elder was the Forwarder of this wicked Contrivance; and therefore representing to her Sister the Condition they were in, she proposed the Expedient of making her Father drunk with Wine; and, accordingly, one Evening they put their Project in Execution. For, having intoxicated the old Man, they put him to bed, and the Elder, lying with him without his Privy, obtain'd her End. The next Night they employ'd the same Artifice, and the Younger had her Turn; So that, in the Event, they had each of them a Son from this incestuous Commerce, * whereof the *Elder's* was called *Moab*, and the *Younger's* *Ammon*, from whom the *Moabites*, and *Ammonites* (both bitter Enemies, in after Times, to *Israel*) were descended. But to return to *Abraham*.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xii.- xxv. 11.

AFTER the Destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, he removed from *Mamre*, (probably to avoid the Stench of the Vale of *Siddim*) and came, and dwelt not far from † *Gerar*, a City

Abraham's
Intercourse
with Abi-
melech.

* *Moab* settled himself in the Parts adjoining *Eastward* to the *Salt-sea*, or *Lacus Asphaltites*, and in the neighbouring Tract, on the River *Jordan Eastward*: For we plainly learn, that great Part of the Kingdom of *Sibon*, King of the *Amorites*, did formerly belong to the *Moabites*, Numb. xxi. 21. *Ammon* seated himself in the Parts adjoining to *Moab*: For it is evident from Scripture, that the *Ammonites* were formerly possess'd of the Parts on the *East* of *Jordan* about the River *Jabbok*, or of the *Northern* Part of that, which was afterwards the Kingdom of *Sibon*. Vid. Numb. xxi. 13. Josh. xiii. 25. and Jug. xi. 13, 23. But these Things we shall have Occasion to illustrate more fully, when we come to describe the Course of the Travels of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, into the Land of *Canaan*. *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. I.

† *Gerar* was a regal City, situate not far from the Angle, where the *South* and *West* Sides of *Palestine* meet; and the Country, to which it gave the Name, extended itself pretty far into *Arabia Petraea*. *Beer-sheba* signifies the *Well of the Oath*, because here *Abraham* made a Covenant with *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*, concerning a Well, which he had digg'd hard by. Here he likewise planted a Grove, and instituted an *Oratory*, or Place of divine Worship; and, in process of Time, here was a City, or considerable Town built, which is taken Notice of by *heathen* Authors under the Name of *Berzimme*, or *Bersabe*. *Kadesh* was a City, lying on the Edge of the Land of *Canaan*, to the *South* of *Hebron*;

Shur

a City of the *Philistines*, at a Place nam'd afterwards *Beer-sheba*, between *Kadesh* and *Shur*, where the same Adventure happened to him, which he had met with in *Egypt*. The King of *Gerar*, supposing *Sarah* to be no more than *Abraham's* Sister (for here likewise she pass'd under that Character)† notwithstanding her advanc'd Age, saw Charms enough in her, to invite her unto his Bed; but God appeared to him in a Dream, and threaten'd him with immediate Death, if he did not return her untouch'd to her Husband. Whereupon *Abimelech* (for that was the common Name, in those Days, of all the Kings of *Palestine*) calls for *Abraham*, and expostulates the Matter with him; who, in Excuse for the Fiction, alledg'd his Fears, lest the Beauty of his Wife shou'd have endanger'd his Life: Tho' it was not altogether a Fiction (*as he said*) because she was so near a Relation to him (especially by his Father's Side) as might properly enough be called a Sister. This Apology pacify'd the King; so that he not only restored him his Wife, but giving her † a thousand Pieces of Silver, desir'd her || to buy a Veil with

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.

B 4

the

Shur was the Name of that Part of *Arabia Petrea*, which joins *Egypt*, and the *Red-sea*; and, somewhere between these two, was that *Well*, near to which *Abraham*, when he left *Mamre*, fixt his Habitation. *Wells's Geog. of the Old Test. Vol. I.*

† *SARAH* was now ninety Years old, when *Abimelech* took her into his Family; whence it may seem very strange, that a Woman of her Age should look so very well, as to be desired by a King, who, in those Days, might have commanded the most youthful Beauties in his whole Dominions. But, according to some Interpreters, People of *ninety* then were as fresh and vigorous as those of *forty now*; and *Sarah* might, even in that respect, excel her Co-evals, by Reason of her *Sterility*, which is a great Preserver of Beauty: Tho' others are of Opinion, that God, having taken away her Sterility, her Beauty returned with her Fruitfulness; for, by this Time, it is computed, that she had conceived her Son. *Howell's Hist. l. 1.*

† The original Word does not so properly mean *Pieces*, as *Weight*, because Money was then paid by Weight; and may therefore be interpreted a thousand Shekels of Silver, *i. e.* about 57 Pounds in the Value of our present Money. *Bedford's Script. Chronol. l. 3. c. 4.*

|| The Words in the Text, according to our Translation, are these, — *And unto Sarah he said, behold, I have given thy Brother a thousand Pieces of Silver; behold, he is to thee a Covering of the Eyes, unto all that are with thee, and to all others; thus she was reproved.* Where we must observe, in the first Place, that the

Word,

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.

the Money, which might not only be a *Covering to her Face*, but in every Country an Indication likewise of her being a married Woman, because he held it inconvenient for her any more to pass for her Husband's Sister. On her Husband he bestow'd in like manner Plenty of other Kind of Wealth, and made him a free Offer to live where he pleas'd, in his Dominions; which generous Treatment engag'd *Abraham* to intercede with God, † to remove the *Disabili-*
ty,

Word, which we render *reprove*, does more properly signify to *instruct*, which must certainly be the right Sense of the Word here, considering that *Abimelech* had already accepted of *Abraham's* Apology, and was so far from irritating either him, or *Sarah*, by Reproaches, that, on the contrary, he was endeavouring to win their Friendship with very considerable Presents. But then, as to *the Covering of Sarah's Eyes*, this may be variously expounded, according as the Words refer, either to *Abraham*, or to the *Pieces of Silver*. If they refer to *Abraham*, then the Meaning of the King's Words will be, *Thou needest no other Defence of thy Chastity, than he; nor hast thou any Reason hereafter to say, he is thy Brother; for so dear is he to God, that God will defend him, and he will defend thee; and not only him, but all that are with thee, and that even among Strangers, without any such Shifts and Equivocations, as you have hitherto thought fit to make use of.* But if the Words refer to the *Present* of a thousand Pieces, then the Sense must be, *I have given him that Sum of Money to buy thee a Veil, that all, who converse with thee, here, or in any other Country, where thou shalt come, may know thee to be a married Woman.* This Sense indeed is countenanc'd by the LXX: But others have thought, that it might better be render'd thus,---*This Money, which I have paid thy Husband, as a Mule, for my having endeavour'd to take thee from him, will be a Means to deter all others from having any Concern with thee, when once they shall hear, how much I have suffered upon that Account.* The Reader is left to his own Option; but we should rather think, that the last of these Interpretations is preferable, *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries.

† The Text tells us, that *God had fast closed up all the Wombs* of the House of *Abimelech*, which Phrase, in Scripture, does frequently denote *Barrenness*; but that it cannot do so here, is pretty plain from hence—That the History of this Transaction is of too short a Continuance, to give Space for a Discovery of this Kind, *viz.* whether the Women, by God's Infliction, were become actually barren or no: And therefore the other Opinion is more probable, *viz.* that it was such an Indisposition, or Sore, or Swelling in the secret Parts, that the Men could neither enjoy their Wives, nor the Women, who were with Child, could be deliver'd. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Patrick's* Commentaries,

ty, which he had inflicted on the King, in order to restrain him from *Sarah*; and to restore the Queen, and the other Women of the Nation, to their wanted *Fertility*, which for some Time seems to have been obstructed.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.

A YEAR was now pass'd, and the Time appointed come, when *Sarah* brought forth a Son, whom *Abraham*, according to the divine Direction, call'd *Isaac*, and circumcis'd him the eighth Day. They were now in the *Zenith* of their Happiness. *Sarah* suckled the Child herself, and * weaned him at the usual Time; and *Abraham*, upon this joyful Occasion, made a great Feast: But, in the midst of their Festivity, *Sarah*, perceiving that *Ishmael* treated her Son with Contempt and Derision, was so enrag'd against him, that she never ceas'd importuning her Husband, to turn both Mother and Son out of Doors. *Abraham* had the Tenderness of a Father to his Child. He loved *Ishmael*, and was loth to part with him; And therefore apply'd himself to God, in this arduous Juncture, for Direction. But God confirming what *Sarah* had requested, and promising moreover to make of *Ishmael* (because he was his Son) a populous Nation, tho' his Portion and Inheritance was not to be in that Land, which was all along design'd for the Descendants of *Isaac*, he was at last prevail'd on to send him and his Mother away.

XX.-XXV. II.
The Birth of
Isaac, and
Expulsion of
Ishmael.

CALLING *Hagar* therefore, one Morning, to him, he order'd her to take her Son, some Water, and other Provisions with her; to go into the neighbouring Wilderness, and to tarry by the Side of a certain Fountain, she wou'd meet with there, until she shou'd hear farther from him. She did as she was ordered: but mistaking their Way, and missing of the Fountain, they had quite exhausted the little Water they had, and her Son being in an high Fever, and ready to die with Thirst, to shade him a little from the scorching Heat, she placed him under a Tree, whilst herself, despairing to find any Succour in the Place, and not bearing to see

* It is not easy to guess, how long it was, that Women gave suck in those Days, because the antient *Hebrews* are divided about it: Some affirming that *Isaac* was weaned, when he was *two*, some *five*, and others, not till he was *twelve* Years old. If however we will judge by what the young *Maccabee's* Mother said to him, *My Son, remember I have suckled thee three Years*, 2 Maccab. vii. 27. that Time will appear the most probable. For there is no Reason to believe, that *Isaac* was weaned before the usual Term, for Want of Care, or Affection in his Mother. *Patrick's Commentaries*, and *Univerf. Hist.* l. i. c. 7.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.



see him expire before her Eyes, withdrew a little, and began to bemoan her hard Fate, while, with earnest Cries and Tears, the Child was imploring the divine Help and Commiseration. The divine Help was not long a coming: For suddenly an Angel from Heaven bids the weeping Mother dry up her Tears, and fear not; tells her, that God had heard the Child's Prayer, and would make of him a great Nation; and, for their present Relief, points to her a Well of Water, which she had not perceived before; and directs her how to cure her Son. Refresh'd with this Water, and supported with other Things, which *Abraham*, (very probably) from time to time, might send them; instead of going into *Egypt*, as they first intended, they here took up their Abode in the Wilderness of *Paran*, where *Ishmael*, in a short Time growing a very expert *Archer*, was able to get Provisions both for himself, and his Mother; and when he grew up unto Man's Estate, his Mother, who was herself an *Egyptian*, married him to a Woman of her own Country, * by whom he had twelve Sons, who dwelt from *Havilah* unto *Shur*, i. e. in several Parts of *Arabia Petræa*, whereof the *Western* Part, towards *Egypt*, is, in Scripture, call'd *Shur*, and the *Eastern* Part, towards the *Persian Gulph*, *Havilah*.

Abraham's
Covenant
with Abi-
melech.

ABRAHAM, in the mean Time, having accepted of *Abimelech*'s Offer, continu'd to live in the Land of *Palestine*, and, as his Riches and Power every Day increas'd, *Abimelech*, fearing lest, at some Time or other, he might attempt Something in Prejudice of him, or his Successors in the Government, came, with the *General* of his Forces, whose Name was *Phicol*, and made a solemn League of Friendship with him. Some † little Difference had arisen between

* The Names of these Sons are, *Nebajoth*, *Kedar*, *Adbeel*, *Mibsam*, *Mishma*, *Dumah*, *Massa*, *Hadar*, *Tema*, *Jethur*, *Naphish*, and *Kedemah*, twelve Princes according to their Nations, Gen. xxv. 13, &c. and as their Descendants were, from their Father, denominated by the common Name of *Ishmaelites*; so, from *Hagar*, the Mother of *Ishmael*, they are also called *Hagarens*, or *Hagarites*, under which Name we find some Footsteps of them in *Heathen* Authors; but certain it is, that the *Arabians* do, to this very day, value themselves upon their being descended from *Ishmael*. *Wells's Geogr. of the Old Test. Vol. I.*

† It will not seem strange, that *Abraham* should look upon the losing of a Well as a Matter of such Consequence, considering how ill furnished these *Eastern* Countries were with Water; and 'twas highly prudent of him to complain of Grievances now, before

between *Abimelech's* Servants and *Abraham's*, about a Well, which *Abraham's* Servants had digg'd. But, after a little Expostulation, they quickly came to a good Understanding. The Well was restor'd to *Abraham*, and the Place, where they enter'd into this solemn Covenant, was thenceforth call'd *Beer-sheba*. Here *Abraham*, intending to end his Days, unless God shou'd otherwise dispose of him, planted a Grove for a Place of religious Worship, and built an Altar, and call'd on *the Name of the Lord, the everlasting God*; who was minded || to make one Trial more of his Faith and Fidelity, and a severe Trial it was.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

GOD had order'd him to send away *Ishmael*, and given him Assurance, that the Blessings, promis'd to his Posterity, were not to take Place in any Part of that Branch of his Family, but that *Isaac* shou'd be the Son of the Promise, and his Descendants, Heirs of that Happiness and Prosperity, which he had made over to him; and now he was pleas'd to require him, with his own Hands, to destroy this *his Son, his only Son Isaac*. A cruel Injunction! But *Abraham*, we see, never stay'd to expostulate about the Severity, or Unlawfulness of it, but, on the very next Morning, without saying a Word to any of his Family, gets all Things ready, and, leaving it to God to make good his own Promises, resolves to obey. To that Purpose, taking his Son *Isaac* with him, and some Servants, with Provisions, and Instruments

Is order'd to
Sacrifice his
Son Isaac.

before he entered into Covenant with *Abimelech*, that, they being once redressed, there might remain no Occasion of Quarrels afterwards. *Bibliotheca Bib. Vol. I.*

|| The Words in the Text are, *that God did tempt Abraham*, but God is said to *tempt no Man*; and therefore all that he could be supposed to do in this Case, was only to make Trial of him; and *that* too, not to inform himself of the Sincerity and Steadiness of his Faith, but in order to the holy Patriarch's own Justification, and to make him an illustrious Pattern of an entire Dependence on the Almighty, to future Saints, and Confessors. The *Jews* reckon up ten Trials of *Abraham*, of which the last was the greatest. 1. God's Command to him to leave his Country. 2. The Famine, which forced him to go into *Egypt*. 3. *Pharaoh's* taking his Wife from him. 4. His War with the four Kings. 5. His Despair of having *Isaac* by *Sarah*, and marrying *Hagar* on that Account. 6. His Circumcision in his old Age. 7. His Wife's being again taken from him by *Abimelech*. 8. The Expulsion of *Hagar*, when she was with Child by him. 9. His Expulsion of her, and *Ishmael*. And, 10. His Oblation of his only Son *Isaac*. *Bibliotheca Bib. Vol. I.*

A. M. Instruments proper for the Sacrifice, he sets out; and, *
 2108, &c. in three Days Time, came within sight of † Mount *Moriab*,
 Ant. Christ. the Place which God had appointed for that dreadful Scene.
 1896, &c. Here, leaving his Servants behind, that they might not dis-
 turb him with their Intercessions or Lamentations, he goes
 From Gen. up to the Mount, without betraying any Sign of Grief or
 XX—XXV. Concern, that might raise a Suspicion in his Son. His Son,
 11. on the other Hand, laden with the Wood, and the other
 Materials for a Burnt-offering, but perceiving nothing proper for a Victim, cou'd not forbear asking his Father, *Where it was?* Such a Question, at such a Time, was enough to have stagger'd any Heart less firm than *Abraham's*, who only answer'd calmly, *That God wou'd provide himself with one*, little thinking how prophetically he spake: For he had no sooner bound his Son upon the Wood, and stretched out his Hand to give the fatal Blow, || but God was pleas'd

to

* The better to explain, how *Abraham* came to know the Place, which God had appointed, the *Jews* have a *Tradition*, that when God bad him go thither, and offer his Son, he asked how he should know it? To which the Answer was, That where-soever he should see the *Glory of the Lord*, that should be the Place; and that, accordingly, when he came within Sight of Mount *Moriab*, he beheld a *Pillar of Fire*, reaching from the Earth to the Heavens, whereby he knew that *that* was the Place. *Hottingeri Historia Orient.* p. 36.

† This Mountain, whereon *Abraham* was ordered to offer his Son *Isaac*, was certainly the same, on which the Temple was afterwards built by *Solomon*, and on Part of which, *viz.* Mount *Calvary*, *Christ* did afterwards actually offer himself unto God for the Redemption of Mankind: Which Offering of his, as it seems to have been designedly prefigured by the intentional Offering of *Isaac*; so it might seem good to divine Reason to assign the same for the typical Offering of *Isaac*, where, in due Time, the *Antitype*, our Redeemer, was to be offered. But, instead of *Moriab*, the *Samaritans* read *Moreb*, and pretend that God sent *Abraham* towards *Sichem*, where certainly was *Moreb*, [Gen. xii. 6. and Deut. xi. 30.] and that it was upon Mount *Gerizim*, that *Isaac* was brought, in order to be sacrificed. But this, in all Probability, is no more than a Contrivance to inhance the Glory of their Temple. *Wells's Geogr.* and *Calmet's History*.

|| The Words of God are, *Lay not thy Hand on the Child, neither do thou any thing unto him*, Gen. xxii. 12. and yet in *Heb.* xi. 17. we are told, *that Abraham offer'd up Isaac, when he was tried*. But this is easily reconcil'd, if we do but remember, that God always takes that for done, (whether in the Commission of Sin,

or

to stop him short || by a Voice from Heaven,* forbidding him to do it, and declaring a Satisfaction in this last Test of his Obedience. Surpriz'd at the Voice, *Abraham* turns about to see whence it came, and spies a Ram, caught by the Horns in a thick Bush, which he immediately took and offer'd up for a Burnt-offering instead of his Son; and, in Memory of the whole Transaction, called the Place, where it was done, *Jehovah-jireh*, in Allusion to the Answer, which he gave to his Son's Question, *God will provide himself a Lamb.*

THUS having perform'd an Act of such perfect and heroic Obedience, as engag'd God to renew his Promise, with great Amplification, and to confirm it to him with an Oath, he went, and rejoin'd his Servants; and, returning to *Beer-sheba*, was no sooner arriv'd, but he was welcom'd with the joyful News of the Increase of his Family, viz. that *Milcab*, his Brother *Nabor's* Wife, * had borne him a numerous

or Performance of Duty) where there is a Will and Intention to do it, supposing the Person to have an Opportunity. *Street's* Dividing the Hoof.

|| The Words, in the Beginning of the Chapter, are, *that God tempted Abraham*, bidding him to go and sacrifice his Son: But in Ver. 11. it is said, that the *Angel of the Lord* forbid him to do it: From whence some may infer, that *Abraham* obey'd the Angel, who bad him spare his Son, against the Command of God, who bad him slay him. But, to solve this Difficulty (if it be thought any) we must observe, that, whenever the Holy Scriptures tell us, that God said any thing, or that an Angel spake, we are always to understand both of them to have been present; for the Angels ever attend upon the *Divine Majesty*, and, being his Ministers, do nothing but by his Order: So that when he is said to speak, it is, *by them*; and when they are said to speak, it is *from him*. It is the Lord therefore that speaks, whosoever be the Minister. *Patrick's* Comment. And the Speech, which God makes to *Abraham*, upon this weighty Occasion, the *Jewish* Historian comments upon in this Manner, " Hold thy Hand, " and spare thy Son; for I did not require it of thee, out of " any Delight, I take in *human* Blood, or that I would make a " Father the *Assassin* of the very Child, which I myself have " given him; but to see how far thou would'st submit to thy " God, in a Self-denial to thine own Inclination and Nature. " But now, since I find thy Piety to be Proof against all Temptations, I do here confirm over-again to thee all my former " Promises, &c. *Joseph. Antiq.* l. 1. c. 14.

* The Children of *Nabor*, by *Milcab*, were *Huz*, *Buz*, *Ke-muel*,

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

Sarah's
Death and
Burial.

numerous Issue, which † determin'd him, at a proper Time, to send thither for a Wife for his Son *Isaac*: But * before he did that, it happen'd that his own Wife *Sarah* died, in the 127th Year of her Age, at *Kirjatharba*, afterwards call'd *Hebron*, in the Country of *Canaan*.

† *ABRAHAM* was then probably at *Beer-sheba*, but, being inform'd of her Death, he came to *Hebron*, there to mourn and perform his last Offices for her; but what he wanted was a convenient Burying-Place. He therefore address'd

mucl, Chezed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlah, and Bethuel, who begat *Rebecca*, the Wife of *Isaac*; and by his Concubine, whose Name was *Reumah*, he had *Tebah, Gabam, Thabash, and Maachab*, from whom the City of *Maachab*, or *Abel-Beth-Maachab*, whose Territories are suppos'd to have been situate between the two *Lebanons*, might probably receive its Name, Gen. xxii. 20, &c.

† *Nabor* very probably either removed with his Father *Terah* (as *Abraham* did) from *Ur* in *Chaldea*, and settled at *Haran* in *Mesopotamia*, or, not long after, followed them thither; because, after that the Family left *Ur*, the first News, that we hear of him, is, that he was settled at *Haran*, and there had got a numerous Family; and 'tis upon the account of his Brother's residing there, as well as that himself had once lived there, that *Abraham* calls it his own Country, and the Place where his Kindred dwelt, Gen. xxiv. 4.

* Some of the *Arabian* Writers tell us, that, when *Sarah* heard that *Abraham* had taken her only Son unto the Mountain, to sacrifice to God, she fell into a very great Agony, which brought on a Fit of Sickness, whereof she died. *Eutychii Annales*, p. 74. *Josephus* indeed informs us, that she died soon after this Event; but if (as he says) *Isaac* was five and twenty Years old, when his Father would have sacrificed him, *Sarah* was ninety Years old when she bore him, and 125 when she died, she must (according to his own Calculation) have lived eleven or twelve Years after it, and this our learned *Usher* makes the Difference between his Sacrifice and her Death. *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† There is something of Obscurity in this Passage of the History. *Sarah* is said to have died at *Hebron*, and yet we have no Notice of *Abraham* removing from *Beer-sheba* to that Place; so that, upon some Occasion or other, we must suppose them to have been parted, and that *Sarah* went to *Hebron*, while *Abraham* kept still in his own Habitation: For to say that *Abraham* came from his own Tent to that of his Wife's, to make Lamentation for her, is not consistent with the Sequel of the Text.

dress'd himself to the People, assembled in a Body † at the Gate of the City, intreating them to allow him the Liberty of burying his Wife among them; for, as he was a Stranger in the Country, and had no Land then of his own, he cou'd pretend to no Right of giving honourable Interment to his Dead, in the Sepulchres of the Country, without the Consent of the Proprietors. He therefore desir'd Ephron, one of the principal Inhabitants, † to sell him the Field, called *Machpelah* †, with the Cave and Sepulchre belonging to it. The Purchase was made before all the People of *Hebron*, at the Price of 400 Shekels of Silver, *i. e.* about sixty

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

† The Gates of Cities, in these Days, and for many Ages after, were the Places of *Judicature*, and common Resort. Here the Governors and Elders of the City met to hear Complaints, administer Justice, make Conveyances of Titles and Estates, and, in short, to transact all the publick Affairs of the Place: And from hence is that Passage in the *Psalmist*, *They shall not be asham'd, when they speak to their Enemies in the Gate*, Psalm cxxvii. Ver. ult. *i. e.* when they are accused by them before the Court of Magistrates. It is probable that the Room, or Hall, where these Magistrates sat, was over the Gate, because *Boaz* is said to go up to the Gate; and the Reason of having it built there, seems to have been for the Conveniency of the Inhabitants, who, being all Husbandmen, and forced to pass and repass every Morning and Evening, as they went, and came from their Labour, might be more easily call'd, as they went by, whenever they were wanted to appear in any Business. So that, from the whole, it appears, that *Abraham* cou'd not have made his Purchase from *Ephron*, without his having Recourse to the City Gates. Universal History l. 1. c. 7.

† It is an Observation of all those, who have written about the *Sepulture* of the Antients, that their *Dormitories*, or Burying-Places, were never in Cities, much less in Temples or Churches, but always in the Fields or Gardens. The Use of Grottos or Vaults is certainly very antient. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I.

† The Word in *Hebrew* signifies *double*, whence it is suppos'd by some, that there was one Cave within another, or two or more contiguous to each other, in one of which *Sarah* was buried, and afterwards *Abraham* in another. But those, who derive it from the *Arabick*, tell us, that, in that Language, it signifies *shut up*, or *walled up*, which, in *Eastern* Countries, was a common Way of making their Tombs, to prevent Thieves from harbouring in them, or to hinder them from being, in any Manner, violated or profan'd. And, if this be the right *Derivation*, then may the Cave of *Machpelah* be translated, *the Cave that was shut up*. *Calmet's Dictionary*,

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx.—xxv.
11.

Isaac's Mar-
riage with
Rebecca.

fixty Pounds Sterling; and there he buried *Sarah*, after that he had mourn'd for her, † according to the Custom of the Country.

By this Time *Abraham* was well advanced in Years; and being desirous to see his Son *Isaac* marry'd, and settled in the World, before he died, he called *Eliezer* the Steward of his Household, and, † having taken an Oath of him (in Case he died first) to procure his Son a Wife.

† What the *Rites of Mourning* for the Dead, in those Days, were, 'tis hard to determine, because we have, as yet, no Particulars of it recorded in Scripture. From the subsequent Practice however we may infer, that they shut themselves up from Company, neglected the Care of their Bodies, and abstained from their ordinary Food. They fasted, and lay upon the Ground; they wept, tore their Cloths, smote their Breasts, went bare-foot, and pull'd off their Hair and Beards. The Time of Mourning was usually for seven Days; but it was commonly lengthen'd or shorten'd, according to the State or Circumstances, wherein they found themselves: And, during this Period, they did not dress themselves, nor make their Beds, nor cover their Heads, nor shave themselves, nor cut their Nails, nor go into the Bath, nor salute any Body, nay, nor so much as read the Book of the Law, or say their usual Prayers. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the Word *Mourning*.

† The Form, in which *Eliezer* took his Oath, was, we are told, by putting his Hand under his Master's Thigh. This is the first Time we read of that Ceremony, which was afterwards us'd by *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, when they were a dying; and the Oddness of it has inclin'd some judicious Authors to think, that it implies a more solemn Mystery, than Men are aware of. Some suppose that it was swearing by the *Messias*, (who was to come out of *Abraham's* Loins or Thigh) (*Gen.* xvi. 26.) others, by the Covenant of *Circumcision*, the Part circumcised being near the Thigh: But the most probable Conjecture is, That, as it could not well be done but in a kneeling Posture, so it was a Token of Subjection and Homage from a Servant to his Lord, he sitting, and his Servant putting his Hand under him; and thereby implicitly declaring, *I am under your Power, and ready to do whatever you shall think fit to command me.* The Custom, however, afterwards in Swearing, was to lift up the Hand to Heaven, (*Gen.* xiv. 22.) and upon account of both these Ceremonies, the Greek Word *ὅρκος*, which signifies an Oath, is suppos'd to be derived from the Hebrew *Jereck*, a Thigh; as the Word *ὀμνύναι*. to swear, is suppos'd to come from the Hebrew *Jamin*, which is the Right Hand. *Ainsworth's Annotations.*

Wife * of his own Kindred, and not of the *Canaanites*, he sent him into *Mesopotamia*, with full Instructions and Authority to conclude the Marriage, and with a Train suitable to such an Embassy.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

ELIEZER, in coming to *Haran*, the Place where his Master's Relations dwelt, stopped at the publick Well, (whither it was customary for the young Women of the Place to come every Morning and Evening for Water) to rest, and refresh his Camels; and being pensive and solicitous how to perform his Message to his Master's Satisfaction, he made a mental Prayer to God, that he would be pleas'd to give this Token of the Successfulness of his Journey, viz. That the Person, design'd for his young Master's Wife, might discover it by some Token of Courtesy to him. In the mean Time * *Rebecca* came to the Well: And, when *Eliezer* desir'd her to give him a Draught of her Water, she offer'd her Service, not only to draw for him, but for his Camels likewise, which (being the very Sign he requested of God) he permitted her to do, for his fuller Conviction.

WHILE he saw her thus employ'd, he took Notice that the Damsel was exceeding beautiful; and, having enquir'd into her Relations and Family, he found that she was his Master's Brother's Grand-daughter: Whereupon he immediately took out a Pair of *Gold Ear-rings*, to the Weight of two *Shekels*, and a Pair of *Bracelets*, which weigh'd about *ten*, with which he presented her, desiring,

at

* Not but that *Laban* and his Family were Idolaters, as well as the *Canaanites*, but then he was much better than they, because he still retain'd the Worship of the true God, as appears from the Sequel of the History, [Ch. xxiv. 37.] tho' blended and corrupted with very gross Mixtures and Additions of his own, whereas the *Canaanites* had utterly revolted from it. *Grot. Par.*

* Great was the *Simplicity* and *Humility* of those early Days, when Persons of the best *Rank*, and of the *Female* Sex too, did not disdain to be employ'd in such servile Offices. Thus, in the following Age, *Jacob* found his Cousin *Rachel* watering her Father's Sheep; and, several Ages after that, the seven Daughters of *Jethro*, who was a Prince, as well as a Priest of *Midian*, kept their Father's Flocks, and us'd to draw Water for the Cattle. So well has our Author express'd that Simplicity of Manners, which we may observe in *Homer*, or *Hesiod*, or any of the most antient Writers. *Howell's History*. l. 1.

A. M. 2108, &c.
Ant. Chriſt. 1896, &c.
From Gen. xx—xxv.
11.

at the ſame Time, that, if they had any Room at her Houſe, he might be permitted to lodge there that Night. Her Answer was, that *that* he might do very conveniently; and ſo, accepting of the Preſents, ſhe made haſte home to acquaint the Family with this Adventure, leaving *Eliezer* full of Contemplations, and Acknowledgments to the divine Favour for this happy, ſurprizingly happy Incident.

As ſoon as *Laban* had heard what his Siſter had to tell him, he went immediately, and, inviting the Stranger into his Houſe, order'd all proper Proviſion to be made for the civil Reception, both of himſelf and his Retinue. At his firſt Introduction, *Eliezer* opened to the Family the Occaſion of his Coming; acquainted them with the Succeſs, that had attended him in his Journey; and gave them a full Account of the Circumſtances of his Maſter's Family; of the Wealth and Proſperity, wherewith God had bleſſed him; of the Son and Heir, which he had given him in his old Age; and of the large Expectances, which this his Heir had, not only from the Prerogative of his Birth, but from the Donation and Entail of all his Father's Poſſeſſions: And, having, in this Manner, deliver'd his *Credentials*, he demanded immediately, even before he did either eat or drink with them, their poſitive Answer.

† *LABAN* and *Bethuel* were both of Opinion, that the Divine Providence was very viſible in this whole Affair; and therefore concluding, that it wou'd be mighty wrong to reſuſe *Rebecca* upon this Occaſion, they conſented that he ſhou'd carry her to her intended Huſband, as ſoon as he pleaſed: So that Matters being thus far agreed on, he thought it now proper to preſent her with the *Jewels* of Silver and Gold, and fine Rayment, which he had brought for her; and he having, at the ſame Time, made

† This *Bethuel* cou'd not be her Father, becauſe, had he been ſo, it wou'd have been improper to have had *Laban*, either nam'd before him, or giving Answer to *Abraham's* Meſſenger, when his Father was by; and therefore, ſince *Joſephus* makes the Damiel tell *Eliezer*, that her Father had been dead long ago, and that ſhe was left to the Care of her Brother *Laban*, this *Bethuel*, who is here nam'd after *Laban*, and is never more taken Notice of during the whole Tranſaction, muſt have been ſome younger Brother of the Family. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 7.

made some considerable Presents to her Mother, and Brethren, the Remainder of the Day they devoted to Feasting and Mirth. In the Morning, *Eliezer*, who began to think the Time long till his Master was acquainted with the good Success of his Negotiation, desir'd to be dismiss'd. The Request a little startled them. They promis'd themselves, that, at least, he would stay ten Days longer : But, he persisting in his Resolution, the Thing was referr'd to *Rebecca*, who consented to go with him, as soon as he pleas'd : So that, all Things being presently made ready, and having * the *Bridal Blessing* bestow'd upon her, she took her Leave and departed, with her Nurse (whose Name was *Deborah*) and other Servants appointed to attend her.

WHILST *Eliezer* was conveying his fair Charge to his Master's House, Providence had so order'd the Matter, that *Isaac*, taking a solitary Walk in the *Fields* that Evening, happen'd to espy his Servants and Camels upon the Road, and thereupon went forwards to meet them. As soon as *Rebecca* was inform'd who he was, she alighted, and * throwing her Vail over her Face (as the Manner of Women then was) she waited to receive his first Compliments. † *Isaac*, with great Respect, address'd himself to

C 2

her,

* The Blessing is compris'd in these Words, *Be thou a Mother of Thousands of Millions, and let thy Seed possess the Gate of those that hate them*; which was afterwards made a solemn Form of Benediction in leading the Bride to her Bridegroom.

* The Use of the *Vail* was the universal Practice among all Nations, as far as History can inform us, except the *Spartans*, who are reported to have been singular, in that their Virgins were permitted to appear without a Vail, but, after they were married, they were never to be seen in publick without it. It was from this Practice of Vailing the Bride, when she was brought to the Bridegroom, in Token both of Modesty and Subjection, that the *Presents*, which he made her upon this Occasion, were, by the *Greeks*, called ἀνακαλυπτῆρια : And thus the Poets, in celebrating the Marriage of *Proserpine* to *Pluto*, have this Fiction — That, upon unvailing his Bride, he presented her with the Island of *Sicily*, in Lieu of her Vail, which he took from her. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I.

† It may seem a little strange, that, upon so singular an Occasion, no mention should be made of *Abraham*, who was a principal Party concern'd herein ; but for this some account by supposing,

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

her, and conducted her into his Mother's Tent, which was fitted up for her Apartment. Not long after they were married together, and *Isaac* grew so fond of her, that the Love, he had for his Wife, help'd to alleviate the Grief, he had long conceived for the Loss of his Mother.

Abraham's
Marriage
with Ke-
turah, and
his Death.

AFTER this happy Marriage of his Son, *Abraham*, still finding himself strong enough to make a new Addition to his Family, took another Wife, † whose Name was *Keturah*, by whom he * had six Sons: But lest they should interfere

supposing, that *Abraham*, before this, had married *Keturah*, (tho', not to break in with the Account of his Son's Marriage, the History relates it later) and resign'd his Estate, and the Government of his Family into the Hands of *Isaac*, chusing to live the Remainder of his Days in Retirement with his new Comfort.

† *Keturah* is suppos'd, by the *Jewish* Interpreters, to be the same with *Hagar*, whom *Abraham*, after his Wife's Death, sent for again, and by her had all the six Sons here mention'd: But, besides that *Hagar* must, by this Time, have been above 80 Years of Age, and, consequently, too old to bear so many Children, the Text itself seems to be against this Supposition; For it informs us, that *Abraham* added, or proceeded to take another Wife, which is a different Thing to his recalling the old one. The more probable Opinion therefore is, that this *Keturah* was a Domestick of his own, a *Canaanite* perhaps, whom he had converted to the true Religion; but then the Difficulty is, how *Abraham* cou'd dispose of so many Sons, in so short a Space, as that which interven'd between his Wife's, and his own Death. To solve this, some have suppos'd, that this *Keturah* became his Wife, i. e. Wife of the second Order, long before the Death of *Sarah*, even immediately after he parted with *Hagar*; but then this Supposition is contrary to the Sense of the *Original*; and therefore if we are minded to adhere to that, we must say, that *Abraham*'s living almost forty Years after *Sarah*'s Death gave him Time enough to dispose of the Sons begotten of *Keturah*, as the Renovation of his Strength, which was certainly miraculous, (for forty Years before, he is said to have been dead to all such Purposes, *Rom. vi. 19.*) enabled him to beget them. *Calmet's Dictionary*, *Ainsworth's Annotations*, and *Universal History*, l. 1. c. 7.

* His Sons were, *Zimram*, *Jokshan*, *Medan*, *Midian*, *Ishbak*, and *Shuah*, whereof *Jokshan* had *Sheba*, and *Dedan*: *Dedan* had *Asburim*, *Letushim*, and *Leummim*: And *Midian* had *Ephab*, *Epher*, *Hanock*, *Abidah*, and *Eldaah*, *Gen. xxv. 2, &c.* And the Foot-
steps

interfere with *Isaac* in his Inheritance of *Canaan*, as they grew up, he portion'd them off, and sent them away towards the *East*, where settling in *Arabia* and *Syria*, they became, in Time, Heads of different Nations; whereof we have Foot-steps both in *Sacred* and *Profane* History.

THIS is the Substance of what the *Sacred* History relates concerning the great Patriarch *Abraham*. † At length, laden with Honours, and out-worn with Age, after he had lived the Space of an hundred and seventy five Years, he took leave of this World: and, by his two Sons, *Ismael* and *Isaac*, was buried in the Cave of *Machpelah*, (where, above forty Years before, he had repositied the Remains of his beloved Wife, *Sarah*) leaving a Name, famous to all Posterity, behind him.

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1296, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.



The OBJECTION.

“ BUT how great soever the Name of the Patriarch
“ *Abraham* may be thought, there are some Grounds
“ to believe, that he did not deserve properly all the
“ Commendations, that have been heap'd on him. The
“ sacred Historian indeed has been very copious upon this
C 3 “ Subject.

steps we find of these in History (according to the best Conjectures) are such as follow. From *Zimram*, in all Probability, were descended the *Zamarens*, a People mentioned by *Pliny*, Natural History l. 6. c. 28. From *Sheba*, the *Sabeans*, mentioned in *Job*, i. 15. From *Dedan*, the *Dedanims*, mentioned in *Isaiah*, xxi. 13. From *Midian*, the *Midianites*, mentioned in several Places. From *Shuab*, the *Shuities*, mentioned in *Job*, ii. 11. From *Ephab*, was a Town of the same Name, mentioned by *Isaiah*, lx. 6. From *Hanoch*, a Country call'd *Canauna*, mentioned by *Pliny*, Natural History l. 6. c. 28. And (to name no more) from *Medan*, a Country call'd *Mediana*, in which is the famous City of *Mecca*, where *Mahomet* was born. *Bedford's* Chronology, l. 3. c. 4. and *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. I.

† This Account of *Abraham's* Death is given by way of *Anticipation*: for when the Text has recited his Sons, and their Settlement, it brings him, and *Ismael* to their Graves; not that they died before the Birth of his two Grandsons, *Jacob* and *Esau*, as the Text has plac'd Things (for *Abraham* liv'd till they were fifteen Years old, and *Ismael* till they were sixty three) but, having no more to say of the Father and the Son, *Moses* here concludes their History at once. *Lightfoot*.

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Christ. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx—xxv. 11.

“ Subject. He has employ’d no less than seventeen *Chapters* in recording the Transactions of his Life, and has drawn some Parts of his Character in very fair Colours. He has represented him * as a strenuous Opposer of Idolatry, and a zealous Promoter of the true Worship of God ; wise and prudent, humble and condescending, generous and hospitable ; with a Courage undaunted, a Faith impregnable, and a Resolution able to surmount all Difficulties ; honour’d and beloved by his own Family, familiar with Kings and Princes, conversant with Angels, and intimate with God. But notwithstanding * all this

“ Profusion

* The *Jewish* Writers tell us, that *Abraham* was bred up in the Religion of the *Zabii*, who, in those early Times, made Images or Representations of the Sun, Moon, and Stars to worship, and that his Father *Terah* was a Maker, and Seller of these Images ; that *Abraham*, being well skill’d in the Astronomy of those Times, learn’d from thence, that the celestial Bodies could neither make, nor move themselves by their own Power, but that there was one only God, who created, preserv’d, and govern’d all other Things, and that therefore they ought to worship him alone ; that his Father *Terah* going from Home about particular Business, and leaving *Abraham* in the Shop to sell the Images, he in his Absence broke them all, except the largest of them ; that, upon this *Terah* being angry, brought *Abraham* before the chief King of the *Affyrian* Monarchy to be punish’d for this Crime ; that the King, being one of the *Magi*, commanded *Abraham* to worship the Fire, and, upon his Refusal, order’d him to be thrown into an hot burning Furnace, but that *Abraham* came out unhurt in the Presence, and to the Admiration, of them all. *Maimonides* in *Mor. Nevoc.* l. 3. c. 29. *Jad. Chaz.* de Idololatriâ, c. 1. *Shalsheleth*, p. 8. *Inchasin*, Part. 9. Fol. 1. But some think that this whole Story rose from taking the Word *Ur* to signify the Fire, as it is in the *Hebrew*, and thence interpreting the saying of God to *Abraham* in this Manner, *I am the Lord, that brought thee out of the Fire of the Chaldeans, to give thee this Land to inherit it.* Since it is expressly said, however, (Gen. xi. 31.) that *Terah*, *Lot*, *Abraham*, and *Sarah* his Wife, came all forth together out of *Ur of the Chaldees*, it may therefore very properly be taken for a City dedicated to the Fire, which was there principally worshipped, and from thence it might take its Name.

* *Profane* Authors (if possible) say more in the Praise and Commendation of *Abraham*, than do the *sacred*, but there is Reason enough to believe, that their Accounts are loaded with Fictions.

“ Profusion of Praise, upon a nearer Enquiry, we shall find, that some Passages have fallen from his Pen, which darken and obscure his Hero's Character not a little. For,

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.

“ (b) WHAT Apology can be made for his Denial of his Wife, at his going down into *Egypt*, and at *Gerar*? He, who was under the immediate Guidance of God, and by whose Direction he left his Country, might have adventur'd to tell the Truth, and in so doing, have committed his Wife to the divine Protection, with a much better Grace, than in the Method he took of engaging her in the Prevarication. Had he done this but once indeed, we might have called it the Effect of some violent Fear, or Apprehension of Danger, which put him upon an Evasion not so commendable; but when we find him repeating the same Fallacy to *Abimelech*, that he had us'd before to *Pharaoh*, and laying it down for a constant Rule of Practice, that his Wife, because she was beautiful, should in every strange Country pass for his Sister; we can hardly forbear thinking, (c) that he had a secret Intent in this Transaction to betray her Chastity, and, by an infamous Lye, to make a Market of her Honour and Virtue; since the History acknowledges, that, by this Conduct, he got from one King, (d) *who treated him well for her Sake*, Cattle in Abundance; and from the other, (e) *a thousand Pieces of Silver, besides Sheep, and Oxen, and Men Servants, and Women Servants.*

xx—xxv.

11.

“ WHAT Apology can be made for his taking *Hagar* to Wife, and thereby not only establishing Polygamy (for which he has been quoted ever since) but expressing a Distrust likewise of God's Veracity, by endeavouring to have Children by her, when God had so

C 4

“ often

• Fictions. Some have averred, that he reigned at *Damascus*; others, that he dwelt a long Time in *Egypt*, and taught the *Egyptians* Astronomy and Arithmetick. Some say, that he invented Letters, and the *Hebrew* Language; that he was Author of several Works, and, among others, of a famous Book, intitled *Jezira*, or the *Creation*: And, among the *Persians*, so great a Man was he accounted, that the *Magi*, or Worshipers of Fire, believe *Zoroastres*, (who was their Prophet) to be the same with the Patriarch *Abraham*. *Calmet's Dictionary.*

(b) *Bayle's Dictionary* under the Word *Sarah*. (c) Christianity as old, &c. p. 248. (d) Gen. xii. 16. (e) Chap. xx. 16.

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Christ. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx--xxv. 11.

“ often promised him Issue by *Sarah*? *Sarah*, perhaps, might be a Woman of an easy Temper, and ready to connive at her Husband’s Failings: But to have her introduced, as solliciting her Husband to commit Adultery with her Maid, is somewhat incongruous; and the more rational Supposition is, that what he did of this Kind was more from his own Appetite, than his Wife’s Request, and possibly, with a Purpose to make the Experiment on which Side the Default, in their not having Children, might lie.

“ WHAT Apology can be made for his severe Treatment of *Hagar* and *Ishmael*, in sending them both away into the wide World, in order to seek their Fortune? *Ishmael*, perhaps, might be a waggish Boy, that, upon one Occasion or other, had put some little Trick upon *Isaac*, which his Mother perceiving might fall into a Passion, and pertinaciously insist, that both the Mother and Son should, that Moment, be turned out of Doors, which the poor Patriarch, to preserve Family-Peace, might possibly be induced to do; but then he should have certainly sent them away in a better *Plight*, than we find he did. (f) He is all along represented as a Person of great Wealth and Opulence: and therefore to have made some competent Provision for her and her Son, is no more than what Justice, as well as common Compassion, exacted of him; but to send a Woman into a desolate Wilderness, with a little Child in her Arms, and with no more than one Bottle of Water, and such a Quantity of Bread as she could carry, out of a Family, where she had, for a long Time, lived in Affluence and Plenty, is such cruel and barbarous Usage, as can hardly be supposed to proceed from the *divine Direction*.

“ ABOVE all, what Apology can be made for his Intent to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*? (g) That God is to be obeyed above all Things, and even in Opposition sometimes to the Passions and Affections, which he hath made connatural to us, is not to be deny’d: And yet this we may lay down for a certain Maxim, that the Lord of the Universe governs himself by the eternal Rules of Reason, and can neither himself act, nor command his Creatures to act, in any Instance, contrary to them. Since therefore, the Command of slaying an innocent Child is a Contradiction of that eternal Rule of Reason, by which Pa-

rents

(f) *Shuckford’s Connection*, Vol. II. l. 6. (g) Christianity as old, &c. p. 79.

“rents are obliged to preserve their Offspring, it is not to
 “be supposed, that such a Command ever came from
 “God. Much more probable it is, that it might be the
 “Delusion of some wicked Spirit, delighting in Cruelty
 “and Blood ; and yet we find the Patriarch not making the
 “least Demur upon this Occasion, (h) nor once expostu-
 “lating for the Life of his Son ; tho’, at another Time,
 “he could be importunate enough for the Pardon of an im-
 “pious, inhospitable, and incestuous City.

A. M.
 2108, &c.
 Ant. Chris.
 1896, &c.
 From Gen.
 xx--xxv. 11.

“(i) *He believed in the Lord*, we are told, *and his Faith*
 “*was imputed to him for Righteousness*; and yet, in the
 “very next Verse but one, we find him doubting of the
 “divine Promise concerning the Possession of the Land of
 “Canaan, and requiring some Sign or Token from God,
 “*whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it ?* A Friend he
 “was reputed to the true Worship of God, and a bitter
 “Enemy to all Idolatry ; and yet we find him planting such
 “Groves, as were (k) afterwards *forbidden*, and ordered to
 “be *cut down, and burnt with Fire* : And, as he gave
 “Occasion for these idolatrous Places, so it is not unlikely,
 “that the barbarous Custom of Men’s *sacrificing their Chil-*
 “*dren to Devils*, might be introduced, in Imitation of this
 “Attempt of *Abraham’s* to offer up his Son.

“So that, upon the Whole, this great *Friend and Fa-*
 “*vourite* of God, as he is call’d, was not a whit better than
 “his Neighbours ; since to his Wife *Sarah* he was *perfidious*,
 “and to his Wife *Hagar* *inhumane* ; turned the latter
 “away shamefully, and would have prostituted the former
 “for Gain ; to both his Sons was *cruel* and unnatural, for
 “as much as he *expelled* the one, and would have *destroy-*
 “*ed* the other ; was guilty of *Lying* and Diffimulation to-
 “wards Men, of *Distrust* and Diffidence towards God ;
 “and perhaps gave Occasion to the most horrid Kind of
 “*Idolatry*, that ever was invented, *the Oblations of Sons*
 “*and Daughters to infernal Spirits*.

“THE like, if not worse, may be said of his Nephew
 “*Lot* ; for (l) what can we conceive more vile and abomi-
 “nable, than the Offer of prostituting his own Daughters
 “to a Pack of outrageous *Sodomites* ? The Laws of Hos-
 “pitality may engage a Man indeed to do much, but ne-
 “ver surely to commit such an Enormity, even for the Ac-
 “quisition of the greatest Good. His Daughters too seem
 “to have had too deep a Tincture of the Vices of *Sodom*,
 “when

(h) Lord Shaftsbury’s Characteristicks, Vol. III. p. 10. (i) Gen.
 xv. 6. (k) Deut. xvi. 21. (l) Le Clerc’s Commentary.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx. xxv. 11.

“ when they were not afraid to make their Father drunk,
“ in order to go to bed to him ; nor afham’d to call their
“ incestuous Ifſue by ſuch Names, as would perpetuate the
“ Memory of the Fact.

“ HAD the Father indeed fallen into theſe Crimes but
“ once, ſomething might have been imputed to the Imbecilli-
“ ty of his Age, and the intoxicating Quality of the Liquor,
“ which at firſt perhaps he might not perceive ; but to be
“ guilty of Drunkenneſs and Inceſt two Nights ſucceſſively,
“ argues a Propenſity to Vice, and is no ſmall Indication of
“ an abandoned Character.

“ IN this Light has *Mofes* repreſented ſome Part of the
“ Conduct of the Uncle and his Nephew, and, in the Courſe
“ of their Hiſtory, has related ſeveral other Things, highly
“ incredible, and incongruous to Reaſon. For,

“ WHAT an odd Character is that of *Melchizedeck*, a
“ Kind of Linſey-woolſey Brother, part King, and part
“ Prieſt, to whom Abraham gave the *Tithes of all* ; and ef-
“ pecially, if we take in the additional Titles, which the
“ Author to the *Hebrews* gives him, (*m*) of *being without*
“ *Father, without Mother, without Deſcent ; having neither*
“ *Beginning of Days, nor End of Life ; but being made*
“ *like unto the Son of God, and abiding a Prieſt continually.*

“ WHAT a ſtrange Prophecy is that concerning *Iſhmael*,
“ (*n*) *he will be a wild Man*, or, as it is in the Original, *a*
“ *wild Aſs-man ; his Hand ſhall be againſt every Man, and*
“ *every Man’s Hand againſt him, and he ſhall dwell in the*
“ *Preſence of all his Brethren* ? Cold Comfort, one would
“ think, it ſhould be to *Hagar*, in her diſtreſſed and diſcon-
“ ſolate Condition, and enough indeed to frighten her out of
“ her Senſes, to be told by an Angel, that what ſhe had
“ conceived in her Womb would become a Monſter, part
“ Man, and part Aſs ; and whoſe Fortune ſhould be to
“ live all his Life long by Thieving and *Moroading*.

“ †WHAT a ſenſeleſs, as well as immodeſt a Rite, is that
“ of Circumciſion, (ſuppoſing it to be of *divine* Inſtituti-
“ on) for a Sign of a Covenant between God and *Abraham*?

“ Where

(*m*) Heb. vii. 3. &c. (*n*) Gen. xvi. 12.

† The Manner of this Ceremony’s being perform’d, whether
in the publick Synagogue, or in private Houſes, is this, —
The Perſon, who is appointed to be the *God-father*, ſits down
upon a Seat, with a Silk-cuſhion provided for that Purpoſe, and
ſettles the Child in a proper Poſture on his Knees, when he, who
is to circumciſe him (which, by the bye, is accounted a great
Honour

“ Where is the Sense of mutilating the Infant's Body, and
 “ thereby endangering its Life, as soon as it is born? If a
 “ corporeal Mark was absolutely necessary to distinguish
 “ Abraham's Posterity from the rest of Mankind, the Di-
 “ vine Wisdom, one would think, should have pitched up-
 “ on some other Part of the Body, rather than that, which
 “ common Modesty labours to conceal. (o) The more pro-
 “ bable Opinion therefore is, that a Practice, so unaccoun-
 “ table in itself, was not of God's Appointment, but what
 “ Abraham learnt when he was in *Egypt*, and afterwards
 “ imposed upon his Posterity to make them more accepta-
 “ ble to that Nation, on whom he foresaw that they were
 “ for some Ages to depend.

A. M.
 2108, &c.
 Ant. Chris.
 1896, &c.
 From Gen.
 XX—XXV. 11.

“ WHAT a *romantick* Story is that of—*Abraham's* fight-
 “ ing four victorious Kings, and putting them to the Rout,
 “ with a small Handful of his own Domesticks; especially
 “ when these Kings (according to the Sense of the best
 “ Commentators) were not petty Princes, but the Gover-
 “ nours of vast Provinces, under the Command of the *As-*
 “ *syrian* Monarch?

“ WHAT

Honour among the *Jews*) opens the Blankets. Some make Use
 of Silver Tweezers, to take up so much of the *Prepuce*, as they
 design to cut off, but others take it up with their Fingers. Then
 he, who circumcises the Child, holding the Razor in his Hand,
 says, *Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast commanded us to be circum-*
cis'd; And, while he is saying this, cuts off the thick Skin of the
Prepuce, and then, with his Thumb Nails, tears off a finer Skin
 still remaining. After this he sucks the Blood, which flows plen-
 tifully upon this Occasion, and spits it out into a Cup full of
 Wine: Then he puts some Dragon's Blood upon the Wound,
 some Coral Powder, and other Things to stop the Bleeding, and
 so covers up the Part affected. When this is done, he takes up
 the Cup, wherein he had spit the Blood; moistens his Lips there-
 with; and then, blessing both that, and the Child, gives him
 the Name, which his Father had appointed, and, at the same
 Time, pronounces these Words of *Ezekiel*, *I said unto thee, when*
thou wast in thy Blood, live, Ezek. xvi. 6. after which, the whole
 Congregation repeats the 128th Psalm, *Blessed is every Man, that*
feareth the Lord, &c. and so the Ceremony concludes. Only we
 must observe, that besides the Seat, appointed for the God-father,
 there is always another left empty, and is design'd, some say, for
 the Prophet *Elias*, who, as they imagine, is invisibly present at
 all Circumcisions: *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Cir-*
cumcision.

(o) Lord *Shaftsbury's* Charact. Vol. III. p. 52. *Marsham's* Can.
 Chron. p. 72. and Christianity as old, &c. p. 94.

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. xi—xxv. 11.

“ WHAT a ridiculous Attempt is that of *Abraham* to sacrifice his Son, who, (according to the best Computation) was then in the Prime of his Life, at least, of an Age sufficient to make a Resistance; and Resistance we may be sure he would not fail to make, rather than suffer himself to be *butchered*?

“ BUT above all, what an incredible Story is that of *Lot's* Wife's *Metamorphosis*, of her being changed into a Pillar of Salt, merely for turning about to see the Destruction of the City, where she had so long lived; * especially considering the several Improvements which later Historians have made upon the Account, too light, and and too improbable, ever to be named?

“ THESE, and many more, are the Incongruities, which occur in this Period of Time; enough to stagger our Belief, and to call the Authority of the *sacred* Penman into “ Question.”

Answer'd by showing why Moses is so prolix in the History of Abraham,

BUT, we certainly judge wrong of the Merits of any Author, when we suffer our Prejudice to blind our Understanding, and to hinder it from attending to its chief Drift and Design. The great End which *Moses* had in writing this Part of his History, was to instruct the *Jews* in their Rise and Original, their Election and Separation from the rest of Mankind: And therefore fit it was, when he enter'd upon the History of their great Founder *Abraham*, in whom they became a *peculiar People*, a chosen Generation, and a Royal

* The *Jewish* Doctors, as well as some *Christian* Fathers, labour to persuade us, that it was extant in their Days; that it was no Ways impair'd, and wou'd last as long as the World endur'd; that what it loses by any Accident, or the Injuries of the Weather, is daily supplied, so that it continues ever the same; and, in short, that it has all the Signatures and Infirmities of the Sex attending it, even as if it were alive. *Saurin's* Differ. 18. Whether it was *Tertullian*, or *St Cyprian*, that was the Author of these Verses, but so it is, that the Poet, be he who he will, has tack'd together several of these incredible Things.

In fragilem mutata salem stetit illa, sepulchrum
 Ipsaque Imago sui, formam sine Corpore servans;
 Durat adhuc etenim nudâ statione sub Æthram,
 Nec pluviis dilapsa, situ, nec diruta ventis.
 Quinetiam si quis mutilaverit advena formam,
 Protinus in sese suggestu vulnera complent.
 Dicitur & vivens alio sub Corpore sexus
 Munificos solito dispungere sanguine Menses.

Watson. Miscel. Sacra, Tom. 2:

al Priest-hood (as the Apostle (p) styles them) that he should lay aside his usual *Conciseness*, and endeavour to expatiate a little upon so useful, and so agreeable a Subject.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv. II.

THE Spirit of God very well foreſaw, that *Abraham's* Character wou'd become renown'd in future Generations; that not only the *Jews*, but ſeveral other Nations wou'd lay claim to him, as their Progenitor; that not only the Saints and Prophets in the *Old* Teſtament wou'd make him the chief Pattern of Faith, and Obedience to God's Commands, but that, even under the *New*, his Example wou'd be propounded for our Imitation, and (q) *his Boſom* be made the happy Receptacle of the Souls of the Righteous, between their Death and their Reſurrection; and therefore it is no Wonder, that he led the holy Penman into a longer Recital of the Life and Adventures of a Perſon, who is ſtil'd the *Friend of God*, and *Father of the Faithful*; who was the great Founder of the very Nation, he was now writing to; whoſe Sons were to be *Kings* and *Princes* in their ſeveral diſtant Countries, and in *whoſe Seed all the Nations of the Earth were to be bleſſed*.

WE muſt obſerve however, that one great Error in thoſe, that have *undertaken* to vindicate the Holy Scriptures, is, their Unwillingneſs to ſuppoſe any Faults in the Lives of the ancient *Patriarchs*; and therefore they ſtudy to apologize for every thing they did, and ſometimes labour even to conſecrate their very Vices. Their Opinion is, that the *Holy Spirit* has preſcrib'd them as *Patterns* every Way worthy of our Imitation; and therefore they think it a Diſparagement to the Scriptures themſelves, if any Blemiſh or Defect ſhould occur in theſe Men's Characters; whereas the Scriptures have no Manner of Concern in any ſuch Thing. Their Purpoſe is to repreſent Mankind, as they are cloath'd with Infirmities, and beſet with Temptations to Sin; and it is a glorious Inſtance of their Truth and Veracity, when we find the Faults and Failings of ſome of their greateſt *Worthies* related, as they really happened, and ſet in a true Light, without Extenuation or Excuse. “ The moſt celebrated of the Saints of God, (r) *ſays St Auſtin*, are not “ impeccable; and from their Faults there is no arguing to “ the Prejudice of the *Book*, in which, as we find them recorded as Matter of Hiſtory, ſo we find them condemn'd as Matter of *Morality*. God has informed us, *ſays he*, of what paſſ'd,

(p) 1 Pet. ii. 9. (q) Matt. viii. 11. (r) *Fauftus*, l. 22. c. 41.

A. M. 2108, &c. " pass'd, but not authoriz'd it, and set the Example before
Ant. Chris. 1396, &c. " us, not for a *Pattern*, but for a *Warning*."

From Gen. xx—xxv. 11. *ABRAHAM*, in the Age wherein he liv'd, was certainly
accounted a Man of great Piety and Worth. (s) We have
the Testimony of several *Heathen* Authors in his Favour;
and *Berosus* in particular, (t) (as he is quoted by *Josephus*)
gives us this Character of him, viz. *That in the tenth Gene-*
ration, after the Flood, there was a Man among the Chal-
deans, who was very just, and great, and sought after hea-
venly Things. But, notwithstanding this, it must be acknow-
ledg'd, that, in this Instance of denying his Wife *Sarah*, he
was guilty, at least, of a manifest Dissimulation.

That Abra-
ham, in de-
nying his
Wife Sarah,
was culpa-
ble.

'Tis in vain to say, (u) that she was really his Sister by
another Wife, whom his Father *Terah* might marry, after
the Death of his Mother; for this brings upon him the
Charge of *Incest*. 'Tis in vain to say, (x) that, as he was
a *Prophet*, he was directed by the Holy Spirit to make use
of this *Subterfuge*, in order to preserve his Life; for this is
making God the *Author of Sin*. 'Tis in vain to say, (y)
that what he declared was Truth, tho' not the whole Truth;
that he conceal'd what was proper, and told nothing that
was false; because his declaring her to be his Sister was in
Effect denying her to be his Wife, which was a direct *Fals-*
hood. Men certainly have a Right to conceal their Senti-
ments, upon several Occasions, by a prudent Silence; but
whenever they make Use of Words, and pretend thereby to
discover their Thoughts, they impose upon their Hearers, if
they do not really express what they pretend: And in this the
very Formality of Lying does consist, namely, in a settled
Intention to deceive others. " (z) For, whatever is said,
" whether in itself it be true or false, whether it agrees with
" the Thoughts of the Speaker or not, yet, if it plainly
" tends to deceive the Hearer; if he, who says it, perceives
" the Tendency, and accordingly uses it to this End, how-
" ever disguised it is, under whatever Forms it is express'd,
" it is, to all Intents and Purposes, a Lye."

'Tis in vain then to pretend to assail the *Patriarch* from
the Imputation of Lying or Dissimulation in this Case; but
then this may be said in Extenuation of his Fault,—That
it proceeded from a Weakness of Faith, and a Prevalency
of

(s) Vid. *Grot. de Verit.* l. 1. §. 16. (t) *Lib.* 1. c. 8. (u) *Cal-*
met's Dictionary under the Word *Sarah*. (x) Vid. *Heidegger's*
Hist. Patriarch. Vol. II. Exercit. 4. (y) *Waterland's* Scripture
Vindication, Part 1. (z) *Bishop Smalridge's* Sermon of *Lying*.

of Fear, which are sometimes found to be incident to the best of Men. He consider'd himself as a Stranger, among a licentious Sort of People, and expos'd to the Power of an arbitrary Government; and, from a Principle of worldly Caution, both to preserve his own Life, and his Wife's Modesty, he concluded that this would be the best Expedient: but much more wisely had he done, had he committed the whole Matter to God's Management, in Reliance on his Promises, and, in Confidence of his Protection.

It cannot however, with any tolerable Construction, be charged upon him, that he went about to betray his Wife's Chastity, since, according to his present Sentiments, he took the most effectual Method to prevent it. (a) For, in declaring her to be his Sister, he made it known that she was committed to his Care and Disposal; and from hence he suppos'd it would come to pass, that, if any of the Country was minded to make his Addresses to the Sister, he wou'd, of Course, come and apply himself to the Brother. The first Motions of Love he knew were most impetuous, and apt to hurry Men into Violence and Outrage; and therefore he thought with himself, that, if he should pass for her Husband, such, as were in love with her, wou'd have no other Way of accomplishing their Desires, but at the Expence of his Life: Whereas, if he pass'd for her Brother, Time might be gain'd, the Treaty of Marriage prolong'd, and several unforeseen Accidents happen, that might give the divine Providence a seasonable Opportunity to interpose in his Favour, as we find it did.

NOR can the Presents, which both *Pharaoh* and *Abimelech* gave *Abraham* upon the Delivery of his Wife, with any Justice, be imputed to his Management; since they were voluntary Acknowledgments for his interceding for them; Oblations of *Gratitude* for their Recovery from the sore *Plagues*, wherewith God had afflicted them; and a Kind of Commutation for the Injury and Affront, they had put upon Persons, so highly favour'd by God, that, (b) at what Time they went from one Nation to another; from one Kingdom to another People, he suffer'd no Man to do them wrong, but reprov'd even Kings for their Sakes.

HAGAR, according to the Opinion of some of the Rabbins, who love to magnify every Matter, was one of the Daughters of *Pharaoh*, King of *Egypt*, whom he sent along with

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xii--xxv. 11.



But he had
no Design to
betray her
Chastity.

In marrying
Hagar he was
excusable.

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx---xxv.
11.

with *Abraham*, when he diſmiſſed him ſo honourably: She was an *Egyptian* indeed, very probably one of thoſe *Servants*, that were given to *Abraham*, and was employ'd about *Sarah's* Perſon as her Waiting-Maid; but we have no Grounds to think, that a Woman of her Extraction, (had ſhe been *Pharaoh's* Daughter) wou'd have condeſcended to ſerve in any Capacity. However this be, *Sarah*, ſeeing herſelf now grown old and barren, and knowing that God had promis'd a numerous Poſterity to *Abraham*, believ'd that, in order to contribute to the Accompliſhment of theſe Promiſes, ſhe ought to give her Servant to him for a Wife; and accordingly ſhe is introduc'd, as making the firſt Offer: (c) *Behold now the Lord hath reſtrain'd me from bearing, I pray thee go in unto my Maid; it may be, that I may obtain Children by her.* This Propoſal, (as *St. Chryſoſtom* (d) obſerves) and the ſoft Manner of making it, diſcover'd a very uncommon Love and Reſpect to her Huſband; that ſhe herſelf ſhou'd perſuade, and urge him to this Expedient, in order to make him eaſy in that Particular, which gave him ſo much Diſturbance, *the Want of Iſſue*, the Default of which ſhe ſuppos'd to be owing to herſelf: * And, 'twas purely in Compliance to this Solicitation of her's, that he took *Hagar* to his Bed. *Sarah*, undoubtedly, was by far the more beautiful Woman, at leaſt if ſo good Judges, as the King of *Egypt* and his Subjects, may be depended on: *Abraham* had now liv'd many Years, without giving any Occaſion to have his Modeſty and Continence ſuſpected: *Hagar* too was no more than his Wife's Servant, and inferior to her in Perſon, as much as in Condition: In a ſhort Time after, when, upon her Conception, ſhe grew undutiful to her Miſtreſs, *Abraham* never interpoſed in her Favour, but left her entirely to her Lady's Diſcretion: From all

(c) Gen. xvi. 2. (d) In Locum, Hom. 38.

* The Words of *St. Auſtin* upon this Occaſion are very nervous, and very ſignificant. *Uſus enim eſt Hagare (ſcilicet Abraham) ad generandam prolem, non ad explendam Libidinem, non inſultans, ſed potius obediens Conjugi; quæ ſuæ ſterilitati credidit eſſe ſolatium, ſi ſœcundum ancillæ uterum (quoniam natura non poterat) voluntate fecerit ſuum. Nulla hic eſt cupidus Laſciviæ, nulla nequitiae turpitudine. Ab uxore, cauſâ prolis, ancilla marito traditur; à marito, cauſâ prolis, accipitur. De Civit. Dei. l. 16. c. 25. where he concludes, with theſe exclamatory Words, O virum viriliter utentem ſæminis, conjugè temperanter, ancillâ obtemperanter, nullâ intemperanter!*

all which Circumstances it appears, that his taking *Hagar* to be his *concubinary* Wife, was not from any Motive of Sensuality, but from a true Principle of conjugal Affection to *Sarah*.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

(e) GOD had indeed promis'd him the Land of *Canaan*, and a numerous Issue to succeed him; but whether that Son, from whom that Issue was to spring, was properly to be his own, or only *adoptive*; or, if his own, whether begotten of *Sarah*, or of some other Woman, was not reveal'd to him. Seeing, therefore, he had no Children of his own, and yet stedfastly believed the Promises of God; the only Way that he could devise, whereby to have these Promises accomplish'd, was by Way of *Adoption*, and therefore he says, (f) *Lo! one born in my House is my Heir*; upon which God clears the first of these Doubts to him, *viz.* whether his Seed was to be *natural*, or *adoptive*; (g) *This shall not be thine Heir, but one, that shall come forth out of thine own Bowels, shall be thine Heir*: But still the *second* Doubt remain'd, whether he was to be his Heir by *Sarah*, or by some other *Woman*, which, for the farther Trial of his Patience, God thought proper to conceal. No Wonder then, if *Abraham* (having no longer Hope of Issue by his Wife, finding her indeed as impatient for a Child as himself, and desirous to have such a Child, as she might account her own, being begotten by her Husband and her Maid) yielded to her Importunity, not so much to pleasure himself, as to gratify her Desire. And this seems to be the Reason why *Sarah* made Choice of a *Slave* (as *Hagar* is call'd in the Text) rather than a *free Woman*, to bring to her Husband's Bed, *viz.* (h) that the Child, which the *former* might happen to bear, might, *imputatively* at least, be accounted hers; whereas one conceiv'd by a Woman that was *free*, would properly belong to the Mother herself.

WHETHER *Polygamy*, in the Age of the Patriarchs, was innocent, or no, is a Question that has much employ'd the Pens of the Learned. * Most of the antient Fathers of the Church

(e) *Augustinus contra Faustum*, l. 22. c. 32. (f) Gen. xv. 3. (g) Ver. 4. (h) *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar.* Vol. II. Exercit. 6.

* The Words of St. *Ambrose*, l. 1. c. 4. concerning the Patriarch *Abraham* are very remarkable, and comprehend indeed the Sentiments of most of the rest. Consideremus primum, quia ante legem *Mosis*, & ante Evangelium, fuit, nondum interdictum adulterium videbatur. Poena criminis ex tempore legis est, quæ

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.



Church maintain its *Lawfulness*, and (i) some of our later Divines can hardly persuade themselves, that a Practice, which the most holy and venerable Men ordinarily engag'd in, and, during that Engagement, continued an intimate Conversation and Familiarity with God; a Practice, which God never blam'd in them, even when he sharply reproves other Vices, and for which they themselves never shewed the least Remorse, or Tokens of Repentance, shou'd be detestable in the Sight of God. Our blessed Saviour, who has restor'd Matrimony to its primitive Institution, has certainly declar'd it to be *criminal*; but whether it was so, under a less perfect Dispensation, is not so well agreed. At present, if we suppose it only *tolerated* by God, in the Time of the *Patriarchs*, we shall soon perceive another Inducement for *Abraham's* complying with his Wife's Request; and that is, *viz.* The passionate Desire for a numerous Progeny, which, in those Days, was very prevalent; so very prevalent, that we find Men accounting of their Children as their Riches, their Strength, their Glory, and several Families reckoning them up with a Sort of Pride, and placing the chief of their Renown in the Multitude of them; (k) *For Children, and the Fruit of the Womb, are an Heritage and Gift, that cometh of the Lord; like as Arrows in the Hand of a Giant, so are young Children. Happy is the Man, that has a Quiver full of them; he shall not be ashamed, when he speaketh with his Enemies in the Gate.*

THUS the Desire of a numerous Issue, the Entreaty of a beloved Wife, and the suppos'd Innocence of *Concubinage* in that Age, may, in some measure, plead *Abraham's* Excuse in assuming *Hagar* to his Bed: But, then, what shall we say for his turning her away so abruptly, and in a starving Condition, after she had lived so long with him in the Capacity of a Wife, and had borne him a Son? To clear up this Matter, we must enquire a little into the Time and Occasion,

crimen inhibuit; nec ante legem ulla rei damnatio est, sed ex lege. Non ergo in legem commisit *Abraham*, sed legem prævenit. Deus in *Paradiso* licet *Conjugium* laudaverit, non tamen *Adulterium* damnaverit. *Durandus*, *Tostatus*, *Selden*, *Grotius*, and others, are clearly of Opinion, that, before the Promulgation of the Law, *Polygamy* was no Sin; but as their Error turns upon this, that the first Institution of Marriage between one Pair in *Paradise* was not design'd by God for a Law, so have they receiv'd an ample Confutation from the learned *Heidegger* in his *Historia Patriar.* Vol. I. Exercit. 1. and Exercit. 7. and Vol. II. Exercit. 6.

(i) Vid. *Saurin* in Dissertation 19. (k) Psal. cxxvii. 3, &c.

Occasion, as well as the Manner, and Consequence of this her Dismission.

The whole Account of this Transaction is thus related by the sacred Historian. (1) *And the Child* (meaning the Child *Isaac*) *grew, and was weaned, and Abraham made a great Feast the same Day, that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the Son of Hagar, the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking; Wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this Bond-Woman, and her Son, for the Son of the Bond-Woman shall not be Heir with my Son, even with Isaac. And the Thing was very grievous in Abraham's Sight, because of his Son. And God said unto Abraham, let it not be grievous in thy Sight, because of the Lad, and because of thy Bond-Woman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her Voice; for in Isaac shall thy Seed be called: and also of the Son of the Bond-Woman will I make a Nation, because he is thy Seed. And Abraham rose up early in the Morning, and took Bread, and a Bottle of Water, and gave it unto Hagar (putting it on her Shoulder) and the Child, and sent her away, and she departed, and wandered in the Wilderness of Beer-sheba.*

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1869, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

In dismissing her, and her Son, was not cruel, or hard-hearted.

WHAT the Manner of celebrating this *Weaning-Feast*, or Feast of *Initiation*, was, we can only conjecture from certain Circumstances, and some parallel Passages, and Customs. There are no more, than the Weaning of *Isaac*, and the Weaning of *Samuel*, (two very extraordinary Persons, both foretold by the Spirit of Prophecy, and both miraculously born) which are taken Notice of in the sacred History. And (if we may be allow'd to suppose a Parallel between them) as the Feast at the Weaning of *Samuel* was a sacred Feast, and kept (m) *before the Lord*, (for the Child was brought by his Mother to the *Sanctuary*, there presented, and there *initiated*, or dedicated by the High-Priest, whereupon a *Sacrifice* first, and then a *Feast* did ensue;) so we may suppose, (n) 1. That, at the Weaning-Feast of *Isaac*, there was a *Burnt-Sacrifice*, which *Abraham*, as *Priest* and *Prophet*, might early in the Morning offer, in order to sanctify both the Feast, and those, that were to communicate in it: 2. That there were Changes of Raiment given to all the Guests, and to all the Servants, to keep the Feast in, and that, without these *Festival-Robes*, no one was allow'd to sit down at the Table: 3. That a new Sort of

D 2

Vesture

(1) Gen. xxi. 8, &c. (m) 1 Sam. i. 24. (n) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I. Occasional Annot. 24.

A. M. Vesture was given to *Isaac*, as an Habit of Distinction, by
 2168, &c.
 Ant. Chris.
 1896, &c.
 From Gen.
 xx—xxv.
 11.

which he was declar'd Heir of the Family, and the most honourable, next to his Father: 4. That there was a Dedication of the Child, or an holy *Initiation* of him, in a very religious and solemn Manner, perform'd by both the Parents: 5. That there was probably a Commemoration of the Entertainment of Angels in *Pilgrims-Habit*, and of the joyful Message then brought, together with the killing of the fatted Calf, and other Provisions made for them: And, 6. That, upon this Occasion, there was certainly a sumptuous Entertainment made for their Guests, suitable to the Character of the Master of the Feast, who was a Prince, as well as a Prophet, and answerable to the End and Design of it, which was to commemorate the highest divine Blessing that could be given, not to one Family only, but to all the Generations of the World.

ON this Festival Occasion it was, very probably, that *Sarah* perceiv'd *Ishmael* treating her Son with Contempt and Derision. The Initiation of *Isaac*, and his Father's Declaration concerning him, which *Ishmael*, who thought he had a *prior* Right, was not able to bear, was enough to exasperate his rough Nature to commit such Rudeness, as could not but break the Merriment of the Feast, and thereupon provoke *Sarah* to exert her Authority, by shewing the Difference between the Son of a *Bond-Woman*, and the Heir apparent of the Family. I say, to exert her Authority; (o) For, as *Hagar* was *Sarah's* Dotal Maid-Servant, she was entirely at her Disposal. *Abraham* had no Cognizance of her; from his Jurisdiction she was exempt, and by Marriage-Articles (as we call it) reserv'd to her Mistress in *Property*; and therefore we find God interposing in the Affair, and advising *Abraham*, in all that *Sarah* shou'd say unto him, to hearken to her Voice (p).

THE Expulsion of *Hagar* and her Son is represented indeed, by our Translation, under Circumstances somewhat dolorous; but if we enquire into Particulars, we shall find them not near so full of Distress, as this Representation seems to make them. *Abraham* is said to have sent them away early in the Morning; but this might be done on purpose to prevent what might pass between them, at so sorrowful a Parting, from being observ'd by too many Eyes. He is said

(o) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I. Occasional Annot. 32. See also the Note at the end of the Objection, Chap. III. of this Book.
 (p) Gen. xxi. 12.

said to have given them *Bread, and a Bottle of Water*; but, as *Bread and Water* include *Eatables and Drinkables* of all Kinds, so there is no doubt to be made but that *Ishmael* was able enough to carry an handsome Competency of Provision for a few Days, or that his Mother might very well carry a large Bottle of Water, or other Liquor, to support them for a Week, or so, while they were travelling thro' the Wilderness. Their whole Misfortune was, in mistaking their Way, and wandering about in the Desert, until their Water was consum'd; but this was a mere Accident, wherein *Abraham* had not the least Concern.

ISHMAEL indeed is, in several Places, call'd a *Child*, and from thence we may suppose, that he was a Burthen and Incumbrance to his Mother: But, if we look into his Age, we shall find, that, when *Isaac* was born, he was *fourteen*; and therefore allowing two Years between *Isaac's* Birth, and his *Weaning*, he could not be less than *sixteen*, when *Abraham* sent him and his Mother away, and was, consequently, a Youth capable of being a Support and Assistance to her. (q) For the Circumstances of the World, we may observe, at this Time, were such, that it was an easy Matter for any Person to find a sufficient and comfortable Livelihood in it. Mankind were so few, that there was, in every Country, Ground to spare; so that any one, who had Flocks, or a Family, might be permitted to settle any where, to feed and maintain them, and so grow, and increase, and become wealthy; or Creatures in the World were so numerous, that a Person, who had no Flocks or Herds, might, in the Wilderness, and uncultivated Grounds, (as *Ishmael* we find became an *Archer*) find Game enough of all Sorts, whereby to maintain himself, and his Dependants, without doing any Injury, or being molested for so doing.

ISHMAEL indeed had, for sixteen Years, continu'd in *Abraham's* Family, and at first perhaps it might be disputed, whether he, or his Brother *Isaac*, shou'd succeed to their Father's Inheritance: But, after that this Point was determin'd, and God himself had declared in the Favour of *Isaac*, he must of Course have become *Isaac's* Bond-Man or Servant, had he continu'd in *Abraham's* Family. So that it was both kindly, and prudently done of his Father, to take Occasion from *Sarah's* Disgust against him, to emancipate, and set him free, by sending him abroad to acquire an in-

D 3

dependent

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1396, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

dependent Settlement, which was all the Provision that Parents, in those Days, cou'd make for their younger Children. 'Twas the same Provision, that his Father *Abraham* made for the Sons, which he afterwards had by his Wife *Keturah*; for so we are told, that (r) *he gave all that he had unto Isaac, but unto the Sons of his Concubines he gave Gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his Son, Eastward, unto the East-Country.* Nay, 'twas the same Provision, which *Isaac* made for his Son *Jacob*, tho' he was the Heir of the Blessing. When he went from his Father's House to *Padan-Aran*, we read of no Servants or Equipage attending him, nor any Accommodations prepar'd for his Journey. He was sent (as we call it now-a-days) to seek his Fortune, (s) only instructed to seek it among his Kinsfolk and Relations, and he went to seek it upon so uncertain a Foundation, that we find him most earnestly praying to God to be with him *in the Way he was to go*, not to suffer him to want the Necessaries of Life, but to *give him Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on*: And yet we see, that, by becoming an hired Servant to *Laban*, (t) he both married his Daughters, and, in a few Years, became Master of a very considerable Substance.

It is our Mistake in the Customs of the Times therefore, that makes us imagine, that *Hagar* and *Ishmael* had any hard Usage in their Ejectment. Whatever the Nature of their Offence might be, or whatever Grounds *Sarah* might have for her Indignation against them, there is no Reason to accuse *Abraham's* Conduct in this Affair, since what he did was pursuant to a divine Direction, which he durst not disobey; was agreeable to the Practice of the Times, wherein he liv'd; and no more than what all other Fathers, in those Days, impos'd upon their younger Sons: Since the Hardships, they suffered, were *accidental*, but the Benefits, which accrued to them, were *design'd*: Since *Abraham*, by this Means, rescu'd them from a State of Servitude for ever; and, according to the divine Prediction, was persuaded, that this would be the only Expedient to make of *Ishmael* a flourishing Nation.

*Abraham's
Obedience,
not to be pa-
rallell'd.*

ABRAHAM's great Readiness to sacrifice his Son, upon the first Signification of the divine Pleasure, is an Instance of Duty and Obedience, not to be equall'd in all the Records of History. *Sanctioniatho* indeed (as he is quoted by (u) *Eusebius*) tells us of one *Chronus*, King of *Phœnicia*, who,

(r) Gen. xxv. 6. (s) Ibid. xviii. (t) Ibid. xxx. 43.
(u) Præp. Evan. l. 1. c. 10.

who, in a Time of great Distress, and extreme Peril of War, took his Son *Jeud* (which, according to the *Phœnician* Language, means *only-begotten*) and, with his own Hand, sacrificed him on an Altar of his own erecting. But, as * this Action was certainly subsequent to the Times we are now speaking of, there are good Reasons to believe, that the whole Account of it is no more than a Relation of *Abraham's* intended Sacrifice of *Isaac*, bating some Additions and Mistakes. (x) For, whereas it is said of this *Chronus*, that he was the Son of a Father, who had three Children; that himself had one Son only by his Wife, but more by other Women; that he circumcis'd himself and his Family; and that he sacrificed his only Son with his own Hands; all these Circumstances concur in the Case of *Abraham*: The chief Difference is, that *Chronus* is by the *Phœnicians* call'd *Israel*, which was properly the Name of *Abraham's* Grandson; but this is a small Mistake, considering that most of the *Heathen* Writers had a general Notion, that *Israel* was the Name of some one famous Ancestor of the *Israelites*, but were not exact in fixing it upon the right Person.

(y) THE only Instance, which seems any Ways to come near the Case before us, is that of *Agamemnon's* consenting that his Daughter *Iphigenia* should be sacrific'd; but the Disparity soon appears, if we consider, that *Agamemnon*, in all Probability, had other Children, and a Queen neither barren, nor old, and yet, fore against his Will, did he comply, and perhaps for Fear of provoking his Subjects in Arms; nor cou'd he bear the Sight of his Daughter's last Minutes, tho' he attain'd thereby his End, *viz.* the Gratification of his ambitious Views in the War, wherein he was

D 4

embark'd.

* A learned Author, in his *Connection of sacred and profane History*, having, by two different Ways of Computation, prov'd, that *Abraham* was older than *Chronus*, subjoins these Words, "And thus, by both these Accounts, *Chronus* cannot be more antient than *Abraham*, rather *Abraham* appears to be more antient than he: And this must be allow'd to be more evidently true, if we consider, that it was not *Chronus*, the Son of *Ouranus*, who made this Sacrifice of his only Son, but rather *Chronus*, who was call'd *Israel*, and was the Son of *Chronus*, call'd *Ilus*, and therefore still later by one Generation." Vol. II. 1. 6.

(x) *Shuckford*, *ibid.* Vol. II. 1. 6.
Vol. I. Occaf. Annot. 28.

(y) *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.

11.

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.

11.



embark'd. Whereas *Abraham* had no other, nor cou'd expect any other Child by his Wife, but this Son, who was a Pledge from Heaven of all the glorious Blessings, that God had promis'd him; and yet, upon this harsh Command, we find him in no Uneasiness or Confusion, but perfectly compos'd and easy, fix'd and resolv'd to put it in Execution, and waving the Weapon in his own Arm, stretch'd out to take away his own Child's Life; tho' he could not but foresee, that, by such an inhuman Act, he wou'd not only exasperate his own Family against him, but expose himself likewise to the Hatred and Indignation of all the Nations round about him.

THE Truth is, several Examples there have been, especially of Persons of a *publick* Character, who have sacrific'd themselves, or their nearest Relations: But what has it been to? Even to Desperation, or the Apprehension of human Force and Power; to a wicked and superstitious Custom; to Pride and Vain-glory; or to the Hopes of preventing or stopping some dreadful and publick Calamity: But the Case of *Abraham* is so singularly circumstantiated, that none of all these can be imputed to it: The only Motive we can possibly imagine, must have been his earnest Desire to testify his Obedience to God, in all, even his most arduous Commands.

How he cou'd, certainly know that such a Command came from God, will best appear by enquiring a little † into

† The usual Ways, recorded in the *Old Testament*, of God's revealing himself to his Servants, were by Dreams, by Voices, and by Apparitions. 1. *Dreams* are, in some Places, call'd *Visions*, and *Visions of the Night*, because Persons, under this Form of Revelation, saw Things, and heard Voices, as plainly to all Imagination, as if they had been awake: But what sort of Ideas and Images affected their Minds at such a Time, and how they distinguish'd *divine* Dreams from such, as were purely *natural*, we are no where told; only if we may be allow'd to conjecture, 1st, Such Dreams as were *Divine*, had none of those confus'd and idle *Phantoms*, which are found in other Dreams, but distinctly represented to their Minds whatever Things, or Beings, God was pleas'd to send, without any Mixture of foreign Images, or Words: 2dly, They were more *lively*, than other Dreams; their Images were strong and vigorous, and fix'd deeply in the Soul; and, 3dly, they were either attended with the Voices of God or Angels, speaking distinctly to them, or had

to the several Ways, wherein we find God revealing himself to this beloved Patriarch. And, to this Purpose, we must observe, that, at first, he left his own Country and Kindred, by the express Command of God, and went into a strange Land, which God had promis'd to give his Posterity. We are not told, indeed, in what Manner God appear'd to him, when he gave him this Command ; but we can hardly think, that a Person of his Gravity and Years wou'd incline to seek unnecessary *Adventures* ; nor can we imagine, why his aged Father should accompany him in them, unless there was a manifest Conviction that the Call was from God.

AFTER he had been for some Time settled in *Haran*, long enough to have his Family and Fortune increas'd in it, and probably long enough to like it, and be contented with it ; God commands him thence into another strange Country, in all Appearance no better than that where he then was, and consequently none of his own Option ; and there

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

How he was
convinc'd,
that the Com-
mand of sa-
crificing his
Son came
from God.

had some particular Instinct, always accompanying them. 2. *Voices* were frequently heard without any Appearance or Representation, and proceeded sometimes from the Clouds, from out of the Fire, out of the Whirlwind, &c. in which Cases, to judge of the Veracity of a Revelation, it was generally thought, that when the Voice was greater, than any human Voice, (as it was on the Top of the Mountain when God deliver'd the Law) or proceeded from a Place, where no human Creature was, (as in the Instance before) that it came either from God himself, or from some Messenger sent from Heaven. 3. At other Times, a Figure or Resemblance has appear'd to Persons awake, talk'd with them, and done several Things in their Company, as if it had been an human Creature ; and yet the Event has shewn, that it was either God himself, or an Angel conceal'd in human Shape. And, in this Case, the Way of discerning them seems to have been, either by the Air and Majesty of their Looks, (as in the Angel that appear'd to *Manoah's* Wife) or by some miraculous Actions, that were above the Power of human Performance (as in that, which appear'd to *Gideon*). In any of these Methods of Revelation, where these several Circumstances concurr'd, it was always presum'd, that the *Dream*, or *Voice*, or *Vision*, was from God ; since it is not to be suppos'd, that he, who sees and hears all Things, and himself is a Lover of Truth, wou'd ever suffer those, that love and fear him, to be impos'd upon by evil Spirits, or even perplex'd by the phantastical Operations of Nature itself. Vid. my *Body of Divinity*, Part ii. c. 3.

A. M. there he appear'd to him the second Time, and renew'd
 2108, &c. his former Promise of giving him *the Land*, whereunto he
 Ant. Christ. had thus conducted him (z).
 1896, &c.

From Gen. AFTER this, when he was driven by Famine into E-
 xx.-xxv.ii. gypt, God sufficiently manifested his signal Protection of
 him, by plaguing *Pharaoh* and his House upon his Ac-
 count. Upon his Return to *Canaan*, he renew'd his As-
 surance of giving him the promis'd Land; and then it is
 said, that *the Word of the Lord came to him in a Vision*,
 wherein the Promise of an Heir, and a numerous Poste-
 rity is added to that of *Canaan*; and, as *Abraham* re-
 quested a Sign in Confirmation of all this, so God was
 pleas'd to comply with his Request, and, accordingly, a-
 gain, he appears to him in a Vision, repeats again the
 Promise to him, supports the Promise by a Miracle, and
 confirms a Covenant by Fire from Heaven, to consume
 the Sacrifice, which he had commanded him to offer.

AGAIN, when *Abraham* was ninety-nine Years old,
 God appear'd to him, and, that his Appearance was in some
 visible Form or Figure, is sufficiently clear from the Text,
 which tells us, that *Abraham fell upon his Face, while
 God convers'd with him*. Here *Isaac* is promis'd, and
Circumcision instituted, a painful hazardous Rite, which the
 Patriarch wou'd never have comply'd with, but from a
 full Conviction of a divine Command.

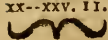
AFTER this, he appear'd unto him under the Tree of
Mamre, in the Shape of a Pilgrim, and, by his whole Con-
 versation with him, concerning the Fate and Iniquity of
Sodom, discover'd himself to be God, or (to speak more
 properly) the *Messias* in human Shape. Soon after this,
 he appear'd to *Abimelech* in *Abraham's* Behalf, and inflict-
 ed a Distemper upon his whole House, which was remov'd
 upon *Abraham's* Prayer; and soon after this, God's Pro-
 mise of an Heir was fulfill'd in the Birth of a Son from
 a barren Woman, which was a Proof equivalent to a thou-
 sand Miracles.

ONCE more, God commanded *Abraham* to comply
 with his Wife's Request, in casting out *Hagar* and her
 Son, though the Text implies that he lov'd them both
 very tenderly. This was a Command so seemingly cruel
 and severe, that nothing but a full Conviction of its
 coming from God cou'd have exacted *Abraham's* Sub-
 mission

mission to it: And now, after all these Manifestations of A. M. himself to the Patriarch, God commands him to offer up ^{2108, &c.} his Son *Isaac*; and will any one say, that *Abraham*, by ^{Ant. Chris. 1896, &c.} this Time, had not sufficient Evidence that this Command ^{From Gen. xx—xxv.} was of the same Original with the rest? God had, some ^{11.} Way or other, appear'd and manifested himself to him, nine Times before this Command. Twice in Vision, twice in Miracle, twice under some sensible Appearance, and thrice in some Manner, not explain'd. He had given him three preceding Commands, which no Man in his Senses cou'd obey, without full Assurance that they were enjoin'd from above. He had often, before this Time, call'd to him, spoke to him, convers'd with him, and, on one Occasion, very familiarly and long; and as we may reasonably suppose, that he always spoke with the same Voice, there is no Doubt to be made, but that he certainly knew that it was God, who spake to him upon this Occasion. For why shou'd *Abraham* suspect that God Almighty wou'd suffer an evil Spirit to delude him into the greatest and most irretrievable Calamity, acting in the Honesty and *Sincerity* of his Heart, and from a Principle of the most exalted Obedience to the divine Will? In so long a Succession of Miracles, Discourses, and Appearances, he must have acquir'd as certain and perfect a Knowledge of the *Deity*, whenever he vouchsafed to reveal himself to him, as another Man has of his *Friend*, when he hears his Voice, and converses in his Presence: And if *Abraham* was fully satisfy'd in this, his Obedience could not fail of being built upon a good Foundation.

'Tis allow'd, indeed, that there is something shocking, *That upon* at first Sight, in the Idea of a Parent's taking away the *such Conviction he was oblig'd to do* Life of his own Child; but then an express Command, from a competent Authority, alters the Case, and makes that, which otherwise would be a Sin, become a Duty. It may justly be said, that he is a barbarous Parent, who commands his Children to be beat to Death with Rods before his Eyes. — This Position is undoubtedly true in the general; but does it follow from hence, that the first *Brutus* was either a bad Man, or a bad Parent, for commanding his Sons to be serv'd in this Manner, when the Duty, he ow'd to his Country, requir'd it? And did *Abraham* owe less Duty to God, than *Brutus* ow'd to his Country? A Captain, who should command his valiant and victorious Son to be put to Death, for exerting his Prowess upon the Enemies

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.



Enemies of his Country, must surely be a Monster among Men. This Position, laid down without any Limitation, is undeniably true: But will it therefore follow, that *Manlius* was a Monster, tho' he put his Son to Death for killing *Geminus*, General of the *Latins*, contrary to the Discipline of the War? And yet it would badly become us to say, that the Discipline of War is a stronger Obligation, than an exprefs, positive, unerring Command, from the great Ruler of the World, the sovereign Arbiter of Life and Death.

His Reason-
ing here-
upon.

So good a Man, as *Abraham* is represented, cou'd not but antecedently be satisfy'd, that a Being of infinite Wisdom and Goodness cou'd give no Command, that would *ultimately* terminate in Calamity upon Innocence and Obedience; and therefore, when a Command of an intricate and mysterious Nature was given him, what had he to do, but to obey? He knew this Son, whom God now demanded, was given him in an *extraordinary* Manner, and why might he not be taken away in a Manner as extraordinary? And when he was taken away, he very well knew, that God cou'd again restore him in a Manner yet more extraordinary, and that raising him from the Grave had no more Difficulty with *infinite* Power, than raising him from the Womb of a Woman, barren at first, and now, by the Course of Nature, long past the Power of Conception, which makes *St. Paul's* Reflection a lively Comment upon the Principles of *Abraham's* Obedience on this Occasion: (a) *By Faith Abraham, when he was tried, offer'd up Isaac, and he that had received the Promises, offer'd up his only begotten Son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy Seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the Dead, from whence also he received him in a Figure.*

And why he
made no Re-
monstrance.

AND this, by the Bye, suggests a Reason, why the holy Patriarch, who, in other Cases, was charitable enough to intercede for the Wicked, does not so much as offer up one Petition for the Life of his innocent Son. He had that true Sense of the Power and Veracity of God, that he was fully persuaded, that the Fate of his Child, and the Tenour of God's Promises wou'd, one Way or other, be made consistent, and therefore he left it upon his infinite Wisdom to find out the Means of unravelling this intricate Affair, without ever once murmuring, or making the

(a) Heb. xi. 17, &c.]

the least Remonstrance. But supposing that *Abraham* had taken upon him to expostulate with God upon this hard Injunction; yet, (b) what cou'd he have urged, but that the Person whom he order'd him to slay, was his Son, his only Son, his Son whom he tenderly lov'd, and that he could not, without the greatest Force upon paternal Affection, lay violent Hands upon him: But now all Pleas of this Kind were fully anticipated by the divine Command, *Take now thy Son, thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of Moriah, and offer him there for a Burnt-Offering, upon one of the Mountains, which I will tell thee of*, i. e. "notwithstanding he is thy Son, thine only Son, and a Son thou hast set thine Heart upon, yet must thou sacrifice him unto me."

IN the Case of *Sodom*, Almighty God is represented as deliberating, and undetermin'd, and there *Abraham's* Humanity, and the Rectitude of his Mind were at Liberty, nay, were engag'd to interpose; but, in the Case of his own Son, God appear'd fix'd and determin'd, and there his Humility, and the Deference due to his God forbid him to expostulate. Not to say, that, if he erred in the first Case, he knew it was the Error of an upright, a humane, and a generous Spirit; but an Error in the latter would be the Effect of Partiality, and Self-interest; and *Abraham's* Heart was too honest, and too enlarged, to allow him in a Conduct, that could any way fall under the Suspicion of such mean and sordid Principles. This seems to vindicate the Conduct of *Abraham* in paying a ready Obedience to the divine Command; but then, what shall we say to the Goodness and Justice of God in imposing it?

GOD indeed governs himself by the eternal Rules of Reason, and can give no Command in Contradiction to them; but, then common Sense tells us, that these are Rules not of *human* Reason, but *divine*, and, consequently, such Rules, as must result from the Relation, which the whole Universe, and all the Parts thereof have to one another; an immense Compass and Variety of Things, which nothing, but infinite Wisdom can comprehend! And therefore we take quite wrong Measures, when we estimate the Nature and Perfections of God from what we find in ourselves; for *as the Heavens are higher than the Earth,*

so

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

so are his Ways higher than our Ways, and his Thoughts higher than our Thoughts.

UPON the Supposition however, that God really intended that *Abraham* shou'd have taken away his Son's Life, there cou'd have been no Injustice in the Injunction, since God, who is the Author and Giver of Life, has an undoubted Right to resume it, when, and in what Manner, he thinks fit; and his infinite Wisdom and Goodness secure us from all Suspicion of his taking it away *arbitrarily* or *unlawfully*: So that, had the Command been actually executed, we must have suppos'd it to have been wise, just, and good, because a divine Command necessarily implies Wisdom, and Justice, and Goodness, in the highest Degree, tho' the Reason of that Command should not appear to such limited, short-sighted Creatures, as we are.

BUT this was not the Case: God never intended that this Command should be put in Execution. His only Purpose was, to make a Trial of *Abraham's* Obedience, not to inform himself in any Thing, who was *omniscient*, and knew beforehand, both what was in *Abraham's* Heart, and how he would acquit himself in this important Juncture; but to make him more *perfect by suffering*, and his Example more conspicuous, (c) *that the Trial of his Faith* (as the Apostle words it) *being much more precious than of Gold, that perisheth, (tho' it be tried by Fire) might be found unto Praise and Honour, and Glory*; and that all future Generations, reading the History of his Patience and Perseverance, his Courage and Constancy, his Faith and Hope, and Magnanimity, might glorify God in him, and look upon his Example, as a shining *Light*, which the Hand of Providence has set up in the *Firmament* of his Church, to guide succeeding *Saints* in the intricate and arduous Paths of their Duty.

The Meaning of Abraham's requesting a Sign.

THOSE, who would gladly find any Flaw in our Patriarch's Character, are apt to suggest, that his desiring of God a Sign concerning the Land of *Canaan*, which had been so lately promised to him, (d) (*whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?*) proceeded from a Defect of Faith, for which, as some pretend, he was so renown'd: But, without straining any Point to get over this Difficulty, we may fairly own, that *Abraham* is here doing no more, than what many *Worthies* of old are known to have done after

(c) 1 Pet. i. 7v

(d) Gen. xv. 8.

after him, when they were put upon any difficult Services ; A. M. 2108, &c.
 namely, requesting of God some outward Token or Re-
 presentation, to strengthen and confirm his Faith concern-
 ing the divine Promises, which is an Argument of Modesty, Ant. Chriſt. 1896, &c.
 not of any Diffidence in the divine Veracity ; and therefore From Gen. xx—xxv.
 the Words are very properly paraphras'd, by St. Chryſoſtom : II.
 “ I firmly believe, that, what thou haſt promis'd, ſhall
 “ come to paſs, and therefore I aſk no Queſtions out of
 “ Diſtruſt ; but I ſhall be glad to be favour'd with ſome
 “ ſuch Token, or Anticipation of it, as may ſtrongly af-
 “ fect my Senſes, and raiſe my poor weak Ideas and Ima-
 “ ginations about it.”

THOSE, that are dispos'd to find Faults, are always *His Practice*
 provided with an Handle ; otherwise one would wonder, *gave no Oc-*
 that Abraham's making Groves the constant Place of divine *casion to I-*
 Worship, ſhou'd be ever brought as an Accuſation againſt *dolatry.*
 him, merely becauſe, in After-Ages, they came to be per-
 verted into Scenes of the groſſeſt Superſtition and Idolatry ;
 or that, becauſe his Intention to offer up his Son gave Um-
 brage to human Sacrifices afterwards, he ſhould be thought
 chargeable with the Event. The Groves of *Moreh* and
Mamre, which were the principal ones, that he planted,
 were (e) (as we hinted before) certain *Oratories*, or Sanc-
 tuaries, expos'd to the open Air, (f) but planted with
 Trees, for the Benefit of their Shade, and for the more
 ſolemn Compoſure of the Mind, and Recollection of the
 Thoughts for heavenly Contemplation. Before the Inſtitu-
 tion of more commodious Receptacles for divine Worship,
 theſe, and ſuch like Places were uſually frequented for
 that Purpoſe ; and therefore they had ſometimes the Name
 given of *the Houſes of God, the Courts of God*, and their
 Trees were call'd the *Trees of God*. In theſe Places it was
 that Abraham offer'd up his Morning and Evening Sacrifice
 with Acceptance ; and if, in After-Ages, they came to be
 applied to abominable Purpoſes, he is no more to be blam'd
 for that Abufe, than *Moses* was for ſetting up a *Brazen-*
Serpent in the Wilderneſs, which was afterwards perverted
 to Idolatry, tho', in its *primary* Intendment, it was *ſana-*
tive and *medicinal*.

AND, in like Manner, if the Cuſtom of ſacrificing Chil-
 dren took its Origin from ſome *Tradition* founded on the
 History

(e) Vid. Page 3, in the Notes.
 Vol. I. Occaſ. Annot. 20.

(f) *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.

History of *Isaac's* being offer'd, wherein, I pray, is either *Abraham* to be blam'd, or God, for appointing him to this Office ; ſince, whether the Cuſtom was *prior*, or *ſubſequent*, to this Tranſaction, God has herein taken an effectual Care to diſcountenance it ?

(g) FOR if, as ſome imagine, this impious and abominable Rite obtain'd at this Time ; 'tis evident, that nothing cou'd be better calculated to abolifh it, than this Command to *Abraham*, which was a plain Document to the whole World, that *human* Sacrifices were not acceptable to God : For, if they could be acceptable from any Hand, they muſt certainly have been ſo from *his*, who, of all Men in the World, ſtood higheſt in the Favour of Almighty God. And therefore, when it appears, in the Event, that this Command was only in Trial of Obedience, and that, when it came to the Point of Execution, *Abraham* was expreſſly forbid to execute it by a Voice from Heaven, and, (to ſhew God's Averſion to human Sacrifices) by his Appointment, a Brute-Animal was ſubſtituted in the Place of *Isaac* ; when all this is conſider'd, I ſay, we can hardly think of a clearer Monition to Mankind upon this Head, than God's own Prohibition of that Practice by a Command from Heaven, and a miraculous Interpoſition of a *vicarious* Oblation.

ON the other Hand, if this impious Cuſtom had not yet obtained, but God, in his great Knowledge, foreſaw that Superſtition would ſoon introduce it ; what could be a more effectual Means, either to prevent, or repreſs it, than the Atteſtation of all *Abraham's* diſperſed Servants and Deſcendants, vouching every where with one Voice, that God himſelf had prohibited their Maſter from practiſing it. And 'tis not improbable (from the Fable of the Goddeſs *Diana's* ſubſtituting a Deer in the Room of *Iphigenia*, who was to be offer'd) that the Memory of God's prohibiting all human Sacrifices was handed down to late Poſterity.

How far
Lot, and his
Daughters
were to
blame.

THUS we have endeavour'd to vindicate ſome Paſſages in *Abraham's* Life, which ſeem'd moſt liable to Exception ; and come now to enquire into the obnoxious Part of the Conduct of his Nephew *Lot*.

(h) IT is not to be doubted, but that *Lot*, who, by the Aſſiſtance of his Uncle *Abraham*, had done ſuch ſignal Services to the *Sodomites*, was, by this Time, become a Perſon of ſome Eminence among them ; had probably married a Woman

(g) Revelation Examin'd, Vol. II. Diſſertation 8. (h) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I. Occaſ. Annot. 21.

a Woman of a principal Family; and was admitted into some considerable Post of Honour and Authority. The ^{A. M. 2108, &c.} ^{Ant. Chriſt. 1896, &c.} *Jewiſh* Doctors will needs perſuade us, that he was now one of the Judges in *Sodom*, and, as ſuch, *ſat at the Gate of the City*, where the Courts of Judicature were uſually held. His *ſitting at the Gate* however ſeems rather to have been (according to the Hoſpitality of thoſe Days) with an Intent to invite Strangers into his Houſe, the better to ſecure them from the libidinous Outrage of his Neighbours.

Two Strangers, (who afterwards prov'd two Angels) he had now under his Roof, when the Inhabitants, from all Parts of the City, flocking together, ſtorm'd the Houſe, and demanded the two Strangers to be brought out to them, that they might abuſe their Bodies: Whereupon *Lot*, deeply concern'd, leſt the Right of Hoſpitality ſhou'd be violated, is reſolv'd to expoſe both himſelf, and *his*, to the utmoſt Peril, rather than thoſe, whom he had taken under his Protection, ſhou'd come to any Harm. Upon this Principle he ventures out of Doors alone among this lewd licentious Rabble, that he might calmly expoſtulate the Matter with ſome of the Chief of them, and divert them, if poſſible, from the Violence, they intended againſt his Gueſts.

THE Offer, which he made them upon this Occaſion, *viz.* to give up his two Daughters to their Luſt, ſeems to be a ſtrange one; but then we are to conſider, that, as it was made in the utmoſt Perplexity of Mind, and out of a vehement Deſire to ſecure his Gueſts; ſo may it, after all, imply no more than this,—"God forbid, my Friends, that
 " you ſhould make yourſelves guilty of a Crime of ſo high
 " a Nature, as to offer the leaſt Indignity to theſe noble
 " Strangers, whom I have receiv'd into my Houſe, and
 " whom I therefore cannot put in your Power upon any
 " Terms whatever. Much rather had I part even with my
 " own dear Daughters, who are in my Power, and who
 " are alſo marriageable, than with theſe, whom I am not
 " authoriz'd to diſpoſe of. Wherefore, I beſeech you,
 " Brethren, deal not ſo fooliſhly in this Matter, but conſi-
 " der what you are now going to do; and ſince, of two
 " Evils, 'tis better to commit the leſs than the greater, are
 " there not Women among you, whom ye may chuſe for
 " the ſatiſfying the Deſires of your Fleſh, and not ſin againſt
 " the Order of Nature? But if there are none found, that
 " can pleaſe you, and you will nevertheleſs perſiſt, I pro-
 " teſt to you, Sirs, I will ſooner loſe my own Children,
 " with all that I have in the World, than even once conſent
 Vol. II. E " to

A. M. 2108, &c. "to depart from my Word, which I have given to these
 Ant. Chriſt. 1896, &c. "worthy Persons. Therefore do as you please with me,
 From Gen. "and mine, ſeeing that I am in your Hand; only touch
 xx--xxv. 11. "not *theſe* *." This ſeems to be, in a great Meaſure, the

Purpoſe of Lot's Propoſal to the Men of Sodom; and yet, with all this Mollification, it has not unjuſtly incurr'd the Cenſure of (i) St. Auſtin. *We muſt not conſider, ſays he, the Offer, which Lot made to the Inhabitants of Sodom, as proceeding from a wiſe, ſober, and a premeditated Deſign, but rather as a Speech, which dropp'd from a Man, ſtruck with Horror at the Thoughts of the abominable Sin, they were going to commit, and who, by the Surprize and Trouble, that he was in, had loſt the Uſe of his Reaſon and Diſcretion. For, if once we may lay it down for a Rule, that there may be a Compensation of Sin (as he calls it) i. e. that we may commit leſs Sins, in order to prevent others from running into greater, we ſhall, in a ſhort Time, lay waſte all Bounds, and ſee every Manner of Wickedneſs come ruſhing in upon us without Controul.*

AFTER the Deſtruction of Sodom, and Lot's Departure from Zoar, he retired, we are told, into a Cave, where his two Daughters betrayed him into the double Sin of Drunkenneſs and Inceſt; and, with what Deſign they did it, (k) the Authors, who would fain apologize for their Conduct, do generally run into this Strain, viz. that theſe two Maids, having ſome Notions of a general Conflagration of the World, and ſeeing their own City and Country conſumed by Fire, were fully perſuaded, that the divine Indignation, which

* *Le Clerc*, in his Commentaries upon the Place, aſſigns another Reaſon, why Lot might, with better Courage, make an Offer of his Daughters to the Sodomites. For, ſuppoſing him to be a conſiderable Man in the City, and his Daughters both betroth'd (as we find they were betroth'd, Gen. xix. 14.) to two young Gentlemen of Eminence, he might ſafely propoſe the Thing, as knowing very well, that they neither *durſt*, nor *wou'd* accept of it. That they *durſt not*, for Fear of Punishment from Perſons of their Rank and Authority; and that they *wou'd not*, becauſe Brothers in Iniquity (however outrageous they may be againſt others) affect always to maintain ſome Form of Decency between themſelves. But it is hard to ſay, what Perſons of their Complexion wou'd either have been *afraid* or *aſham'd* to do, had the Bent of their Inclination tended that Way.

(i) In Gen. Tom. 4. Quæſt. 46. & contra Mendatium, c. 9. & c. 7. (k) Origen's Hom. 5. p. 15. col. 2. St Ambroſe de Abraham, l. 1. and St Chryſoſtom's Hom. in Locum.

which had consumed the *Sodomites*, had fallen over the Face of the whole Earth, and that their Father was the only Man left, from whose Body Mankind was to be repropagated. They were *young*, and unexperienced, *say they*, and might therefore very well be ignorant, that several Parts of the Earth were inhabited, as well as the Plain of *Sodom* had been. As far as their Eye would reach, they saw nothing but sulphureous Flames, and a wide Theatre of Perdition; and this they look'd upon as the final Catastrophe, which, as they had been told, was to put a Period to Nature. They had unaccountably lost their Mother too; so that they concluded, that they, and their Father, were the only Survivors of human Nature, (as *Noah* and his Family had been after the Flood) and that therefore 'twas their Duty to take Care to prevent the Extinction of the *Species*. And tho' they knew it to be a very grievous Sin in itself, to betray their own Father into a carnal Knowledge of themselves; yet they thought they shou'd be more inexcusable, if they should rate the Chastness of their Bodies so high, as not to part with it, rather than Mankind should be no more.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.



BUT all this is no more than a plausible Fiction, without any Foundation to support it. They had lately left *Zoar*; and knew that it was well inhabited; and were therefore convinc'd, that they and their Father were not the only three Persons left alive in the World: But this they knew very well, (*1*) that there was not so much as one of all their Kindred left, by whom they could raise up Seed or Successors to their Father; those, of their Father's Side, being at a vast Distance from them; and those, of their Mother's, every one destroyed in the Conflagration of *Sodom*.

Now it was at that Time an universal Law, which became afterwards a particular one of the *Jews*, that Marriages shou'd be contracted within the Family, to preserve Inheritances, and to avoid the Mixture of Seeds: So that the two Sisters here argu'd very justly upon the Principles then universally admitted, *i. e.* upon the general Law of Nations. For, seeing they had no Brother to keep up their Name and Family, and their Father had lost their Mother, by whom he might have had other Children, and they themselves, their Husbands, before Consummation, in the common Destruction; there was no apparent Possibility of preserving their Father's Family from utter Extinction after their three Lives, or of averting the sad *Curse of Excision*, but by the very Method, which, at last, they concerted between them:

E 2

So

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv, 11.

So that they had the Plea of Necessity on their Sides to excuse, if not to justify them: And, that they were not led by any Spirit of Uncleanness to this Action, we have these Presumptions to believe:—That, in the Midst of all the Impurities of the most wicked City under Heaven, they had preserv'd their Innocence and Virginity; that they unanimously joined together in the same Contrivance, whereas vicious Intrigues are seldom communicated, and, whenever they are, always occasion Quarrels; that, what they did once they never repeated, and so cannot be suspected of having been incited by brutal Lust; and, lastly, that they were so far from being conscious to themselves of having acted upon any base and sinful Inducement, that, in the Names of their Children, they took Care to perpetuate the Memory of it to Posterity; which they never would have done, had they thought it a Reproach to their Father's Name.

THEIR Father too, in the Matter of Incest, may in some Measure be excus'd, for as much as he offer'd no Violence to his Daughters, but was altogether passive, and impos'd upon by them; but then, it must be consider'd, that had he not allow'd himself to drink to Excess, it had not been in the Power of his Daughters to deceive him. The Daughters indeed, without this Expedient, cou'd not have attain'd their End; but then the Unjustifiableness of the Means dissecrates the End, even tho' it were good and laudable before. The short is, both Father and Daughters, in this whole Transaction, were not without Sin: And therefore whatever may be said in Mitigation of their Faults, we mistake the Matter widely, if we think that the sacred History, in barely relating them, means either to approve or commend them.

Melchisedeck's Character explain'd, and justified.

It cannot be denied indeed, but that sundry Difficulties occur in the Character of *Melchisedeck*, as he is describ'd in the Holy Scriptures; but there is certainly no Incongruity in his being both King and Priest in one Person. For, if we cast our Eye into any antient Writer, we shall find that, before the Institution of a separate Order of Men, the *regal* and *sacerdotal* Offices both went together; and that he, who was appointed to govern the Affairs of State, had always a Right to *minister about holy Things*. This is an Observation, that the Writings of *Homer* will verify in almost innumerable Instances; but (to mention but one, out of each of his Poems) after *Agamemnon* was constituted the Head of the *Grecian* Army, (*m*) we find him every where, in the publick Sacrifices, performing the Priest's Office, and

the

(*m*) Iliad 3. Iliad 8. & in aliis locis.

the other *Grecian* Kings and Heroes bearing their Parts under him in the Administration : And (*n*) when *Nestor* made a Sacrifice to *Minerva*, *Stratius* and the noble *Echephron* led the Bull to the Altar ; *Aretus* brought the Water, and Canisters of Corn ; *Perseus* brought the Vessel to receive the Blood ; *Thrasymedes*, Son of *Nestor*, knock'd down the Ox ; but *Nestor* himself acted as Priest, and perform'd the rest of the Ceremony.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

IF we look into some of the best Historians, we shall find this Point more confirm'd. For, among the *Lacedæmonians*, whenever they went to Battle, the King, according to (*o*) *Plutarch*, always perform'd the Sacrifice ; and, in the Army (as *Xenophon* (*p*) informs us) his chief Business was, to have the supreme Command of the Forces, and to be their Priest in the Offices of Religion. In the Time of the Heroes, says *Aristotle*, (*q*) the Custom was, for one and the same Person to be General of the Forces, Judge, and High-Priest, according to that known Verse in (*r*) *Virgil*,

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum, Phæbique sacerdos.

So that, in short, from any Thing that appears in History, we have no Reason to think, that, until some Ages after *Homer*, Mankind had any other publick Ministers in Religion, but those who were the Kings, and Governors of the State.

THERE were indeed, in antient Times, many little Islands, and small Tracts of Land, where Civil Government was not set up in Form ; but the Inhabitants liv'd together in Peace and Quiet, under the Direction of some eminent Person, who rul'd them by wise Admonitions, and by instructing them in the great Principles of Religion ; and the Governors of these Countries affected * to be called *Priests* rather than *Kings*. But, if at any Time they, and their People came to form a *political* Society, upon more express Terms and Conditions ; then we find these sort of Persons call'd both *Priests* and *Kings*. These small States indeed

E 3

cou'd

(*n*) Odyss. 3. (*o*) In Lycurgo. (*p*) De Repub. Lacedæm. (*q*) Polit. l. 1. (*r*) Æneid. iii. ver. 80.

* Thus *Jethro* is called by *Moses*, not the King, but the Priest of *Midian* ; and thus *Chryses*, the Priest of *Apollo* at *Chrysa*, and not the King of *Chrysa*, tho' both he and *Jethro* were the Governors of the Countries, where they liv'd. *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 6.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.

11.

cou'd have but little Power to support themselves against the Encroachment of their Neighbours. Their Religion was their greatest Strength: And therefore it was their happiest Circumstance, that their Kings or Governors were reputed sacred by their Neighbours, and so highly favour'd by God for their great and singular Piety, that it was thought a dangerous Thing to violate their Rights, or insure the People under their Protection.

SUCH a King as this was the great *Melchisedeck*, who came out to gratulate the Patriarch *Abraham*: And 'tis no bad Conjecture of some, that he was called the King of *Salem*, not so much upon Account of *Salem's* being the proper Name of any determinate Place, the Seat of his Dominion; as that, in general, it signified *Peace*, and that therefore *Melchisedeck* was the King of Peace, or the *peaceable King*; because the Sacredness of his Character secur'd him from being invaded by his Neighbours, and his wife Administration kept all Things in good Order, so that he was never molested by his Subjects.

THIS however is no more than a Conjecture, because it is certain, that there were two Places in *Palestine*, which went under that Name; the one, the same with that, which was afterwards called *Jerusalem*, and the other, a Town lying upon the Banks of the River *Jordan*, not far from the Place, (s) where *John* (our Saviour's *Forerunner*) is said to have baptiz'd. Here formerly were seen the Ruins of the Palace of this *Melchisedeck*, which, in the Time of St *Ferom*, (as he tells us) discover'd the Magnificence of it's Structure: and, upon that Father's Authority, several modern Authors have gone into the Opinion, that this Place was the Metropolis of that Prince. But since that City, even according to the Testimony of the same St *Ferom*, was quite demolish'd by *Abimelech*, 'tis hardly conceivable, how such remarkable Remains should be of so long Continuance, and yet escape the Observation of *Josephus*, who was no undiligent Enquirer into the Antiquities of the *Jewish* Nation, and yet his express Declaration is, That *Melchisedeck* (t) was King of *Solyma*, which is now called *Jerusalem*.

It is the much more probable Opinion therefore, (u) that this Palace was built by *Jeroboam*, when he repair'd *Salem*, and that the Inhabitants (possibly the *Samaritans*) in After-Ages, either devised, or promoted a false Tradition, that it originally

(s) John iii. 22. (t) Antiq. l. 1. c. 11. (u) Heidegger's Hist. Patriarch. Vol. I. Exercit. 2.

originally belong'd to *Melchisedeck*. For the general Consent of the Antients give it clearly for *Jerusalem*, as duly considering, that *Abraham's* Rout, in returning from the Territories of *Damascus* to *Hebron*, was directly through its Coasts, (whereas the other *Salem* lay devious, to the North) and that there was a Kind of *Propriety* in the Mystery, and what the *Analogy* of the Thing seem'd to require, that *Melchisedeck* should be King of that very Place, in which the true *Prince of Peace* (whereof he was a *Type* and *Representation*) was, in future Ages, to make his Appearance.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx--xxv. 11.

WHO this *Melchisedeck* was, is still an hard Question, that has puzzled most Interpreters. The Author to the *Hebrews* indeed has recorded a Description of him; but this is so far from giving us any Light, that it has; in a great Measure, been the Occasion of leading some into a Persuasion, (x) that the Person, here call'd *Melchisedeck*, was an Angel; others, that he was the Son of God; and others, that he was the Holy Ghost, in the Shape and Appearance of Man; because they cannot conceive how the Qualities, ascrib'd to this excellent Personage, can comport with any human Creature. The Phrase however made use of by the Apostle, ἀγενεαλόγητος *without Descent, or without Genealogy*, explains what the Apostle means by, *without Father, and without Mother*, i. e. * without any Father or Mother, mention'd in the Genealogies of *Moses*, where the Parents of all pious *Worthies* are generally set down with great Exactness; (y) So that there being no Genealogy at all of *Melchisedeck* recorded in Scripture, he is introduc'd at once; even like a *Man dropp'd down from Heaven*, for so the Description goes on, *having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life*, i. e. in the History of *Moses*, which (contrary to its common Usage, when it makes mention of great Men) takes no Notice at all of the Time, either of his Birth or Death, and herein *he is made like unto the Son of God*, i. e. by the History of *Moses*, which mentions him appearing, and acting upon the Stage, without either *Entrance* or *Exit*, as if, like the *Son of God*, he had *abode a Priest continually*.

THIS

(x) Vid. *Calmet's* and *Saurin's* Dissert. sur *Melchisedeck*. *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriarch. Vol. II.

* From the Times of *Epiphanius* there were Names invented for the Father and Mother of *Melchisedeck*. To his Father was given the Name of *Heraclas*, or *Heracles*; and to his Mother, that of *Astaroth*, or *Astaria*. *Calmet's* Dictionary.

(y) *Scott's* Christian Life, Part ii. c. 7.

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx-xxv. 11.

Who this
Melchise-
deck was
not.

THIS is the common, and † the best approv'd Interpretation of the Apostle's Words; but still the Question returns upon us, to whom can this *Character*, even with this *Comment*, belong?

THE *Jews* are generally of Opinion, and herein are follow'd by some *Christians*, that *Melchisedeck* was the same with

† The learned *Heidegger*, in my Opinion, has taken the right Method to explain this difficult passage of St *Paul* to the *Hebrews*. He supposes, (as there really is) a two-fold *Melchisedeck*, the one *historical*, whereof *Moses* gives us an Account in the xivth Chapter of *Genesis*, as that he was the King, as well as Priest of *Jerusalem*; the other *allegorical*, whom St *Paul* describes in the Words now under Consideration, and this allegorical Person is *Christ*. The Word *Melchisedeck*, simply consider'd, means the *King of Righteousness*; and, from this Sense of the Word, in its appellative Acceptation, and the Remembrance of this Person's being a *Priest*, as well as a King, the Apostle took Occasion to draw the Comparison between him and *Christ*, in order to shew the Pre-eminence of the *Christian*, above the *Aaronical* Priesthood; and what he ascribes to the historical *Melchisedeck*, upon this Account, is only to be understood in an *imperfect* and improper Sense, that is, really and literally true only in the Person of *Christ*. The Apostle was minded, in short, to illustrate his Argument with some Comparison; and, writing at this Time to the *Jews* (who were well acquainted with this *allegorical* Way of arguing) he cou'd meet with none, in the whole Compass of their Law, so commodious for this Purpose, as this *Melchisedeck*: and therefore as *Christ*, the heavenly *Melchisedeck*, was *without Father*, *without Mother*, *without Descent* here on Earth, in respect of his Divinity, *having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life*; so the like Properties may, in some measure, be applied to the earthly *Melchisedeck*; forasmuch as, in the Book of *Genesis*, wherein all great Men's Genealogies are suppos'd to be recorded, there is no Mention made, either of his Birth, Family, or Death; only he was invest'd with a Royal Priesthood, which assimilates him to *Christ*. He had a Father and Mother, no doubt, and was born, and died, like other Men; but, because these Things are not related by *Moses*, the Apostle looks upon them, as tho' they had never been. So that the whole Hinge of Comparison turns upon the Silence of the sacred Historian, who, in a Book (wherein it might be expected otherwise) makes no manner of Mention, either of the Beginning or Ending of *Melchisedeck's* Life or Priesthood: And 'tis for this Reason, that he, who wrote by the Guidance of the blessed Spirit, was directed to conceal these Matters; that, in this Situation, this same *Melchisedeck* might be a more proper Type of so sublime a Thing, as that of the Priesthood of *Jesus Christ*. Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 2.

with *Shem*, one of the Sons of *Noah*, whom they suppose alive in the Days of *Abraham*, the only Person upon Earth, A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx—xxv. 1 f. say they, who cou'd, with Justice, be called his *Superior*, and whom the Description of the Apostle cou'd, in any tolerable Manner, besit, as being a Person of many Singularities, born before the Deluge, having no Ancestors then alive, and whose Life had been of an immense Duration, in Comparison of those, who came after him. But, not to dispute the Fact, whether *Shem* was, at that Time, alive or no, (z) it seems very incongruous to think, that *Moses*, who all along mentions him in his proper Name, shou'd, upon this Occasion, disguise his Sense with a fictitious one; and very incompatible it is with what we know of *Shem*, that he shou'd be said to be *without Father*, and *without Mother*, when his Family is so plainly recorded in Scripture, and all his Progenitors may, in a Moment, be trac'd to their Fountain-Head in *Adam*. Besides, had *Melchisedeck* and *Shem* been the same Person, the Apostle wou'd hardly have made him of a Family different to *Abraham*, much less wou'd he have set him in such an Eminence above the *Patriarch*, or thereupon broke out into this Exclamation concerning him; *Consider how great this Man was, unto whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave the Tenth of the Spoils!*

THESE Arguments seem to evince that *Melchisedeck* and *Shem* were different Persons; and much more Reason have we to suppose, that he and *Ham*, that wicked Son of *Noah*, were so. For who, upon deliberate Thoughts, can believe, that this cursed Person was the *Priest of the most high God*, from whom *Abraham* so joyfully receiv'd the sacerdotal Benediction, that he returned it with the Payment of his *Tithes*? And much less can we believe, that one of his ill Character was the *Type* of the blessed *Jesus*. *Jesus* indeed himself, if he be taken for *Melchisedeck*, appearing to *Abraham* in an human Shape, (as he is often suppos'd to do in Scripture) will answer all the Character, which the Apostle gives of this extraordinary Person: But then the Wonder is, that the Historian shou'd never give us the least Intimation of this; that *Abraham* shou'd express no Manner of Surprise upon such an Interview; and (what is more) how the *Type* and the *Antitype* can possibly be represented the same. (a) For this is the Case: Here *Melchisedeck* was a Representative of our Saviour, according to that of the Apostle, *Jesus was a Priest after the Order of Melchisedeck*, which

he

(z) *Bochart's Phaleg. l. 2. c. 1.*
of Religion, Vol. I.

(a) *Edwards's Survey*

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

he explains in another Place, *after the Similitude of Melchisedeck there arifeth another Priest*; as much as to fay, *Melchisedeck and Chrift* were like one another in feveral Things, and thereupon one was design'd to be a fit *Type* of the other: But as it is unreaſonable and abſurd to fay, that a Perſon is like himſelf, ſo we cannot rationally imagine, that *Chrift*, who, as *St Paul* ſays, was *after the Similitude of Melchisedeck*, was, in reality, the ſame Perſon with him.

THUS we have look'd into * ſome of the chief Conjectures concerning this great Man, which ſeem to have any Plauſibility in them; and, after all, muſt content ourſelves with what the Scriptures nakedly report of him, viz. That this *Melchisedeck* was both a King and a Priest (for theſe two Offices were antiently united) in the Land of *Paleſtine*, in the City of *Jeruſalem*, deſcended, not improbably, * from wicked

* The ſole Queſtion concerning the perſon of *Melchisedeck* would ſupply Matter for a whole Volume, even tho' one ſhou'd do no more than recite the Catalogue of the different Opinions, to which it has given Riſe, and the Reaſon, upon which each Conjecturer has endeavour'd to eſtabliſh his own. The *Melchisedecians*, a Sect in the early Times of the Church, maintain'd, that he was a certain divine Power ſuperior to *Chriſt*: *Hieraxes* the *Egyptian*, that he was the Holy Ghof, becauſe compar'd to the Son of God: The *Samaritans*, and many *Jews*, that he was *Shem*, the Son of *Noah*. Mr *Jurieu* [in his *Hiſt. Critique des Dogmes*, &c. l. 1.] of late, that he was *Ham*, another Son of his: *Origen*, that he was an Angel: *Athanaſius*, that he was the Son of *Melchi*, the Grandſon of *Salaad*: *Patricides*, that he was the Son of *Phaleg*: *Irenæus*, that he was King of *Jeruſalem*: *St Jerom*, that he was the King of *Salem*, in *Scythopolis*; and a certain anonymous Author, that he was a Man immediately created by God, as was *Adam*: And becauſe he is ſaid to have had no Relations, ſome have given out, that the Earth open'd her Mouth, and ſwallow'd them all up; whiſt others, becauſe he is ſaid to have *had no End of Life*, ſuppoſe that he was tranſlated, and is now with *Enoch* and *Elias*, in a State of Paradife. *Heidegger's* *Hiſt. Patriar.* Vol. II. Exerc. 2. But all theſe Opinions are at preſent reduc'd to theſe two, whether this *Melchisedeck* was a meer mortal Man, or the Son of God in human Shape, which the Reader may find ſupported with Arguments on both Sides, in both *Saurin's* and *Calmet's* Diſſertations upon this Subject.

* Thoſe, who make him to be the Son of *Melchi*, an idolatrous King, and of a Queen nam'd *Salem*, have an antient Tradition, that *Melchi*, having reſolv'd to offer a Sacrifice to his Gods, ſent

wicked and idolatrous Parents, but himself a Person of singular Virtue and Piety, the *Priest of the most high God*, but perhaps the first, and the last of his Race; who was so, which might give Occasion to the *Apostle* to describe him under such ambiguous Terms; for the whole of these (according to the Judgment of a learned Author) * may not improperly

A. M.
2103, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xxiv. &c.
II.

sent his Son *Melchisedeck* to fetch him seven Calves, that he might sacrifice them; but that, as he was going, he was enlighten'd by God, and immediately return'd to his Father to remonstrate to him the Vanity of Idols. His Father in Wrath sent him back to fetch the Victims, and, while he was gone, offer'd up to his Gods his own Son, who was the elder Brother of *Melchisedeck*, with a great Number of other Children. *Melchisedeck* returning, and conceiving a great Horror at his Butchery, retir'd to Mount *Tabor*, where he liv'd for seven Years without Clothes, and without any other Food, but wild Fruits, or any other Drink, but the Dew, that he suck'd up from the Plants; till, at length, *Abraham*, by the Direction of God, went up to the Mount, found out *Melchisedeck*, clothed him, and brought him down with him. But those, who wou'd have him be the Son of *Phaleg*, relate a still stranger Story, viz. That *Noah*, upon his Death-Bed, charged his Son *Seth* to take *Melchisedeck*, the Son of *Phaleg*, with him, and go to a Place, which the Angel of the Lord shou'd shew them, and there bury the Body of *Adam*, which he had preserv'd in the Ark during the Flood; that in that Place *Melchisedeck* should fix his Habitation, lead a single Life, and entirely addict himself to the Practice of Piety, because God had made Choice of him for his *Priest*, but allow'd him not to shed the Blood of any Animal, nor to offer any other Oblation to him, but that of Bread and Wine only; that *Seth* and *Melchisedeck* did as *Noah* had enjoin'd them, and buried *Adam* in the Place, which the Angel pointed out; that, upon their parting, *Melchisedeck* betook himself to the monastick Course of Life, which *Noah* had prescrib'd him; but that twelve neighbouring Kings, hearing of his Fame, and desirous of his Acquaintance, consulted together, and built a City, whereof they constituted him King and Governor, and, in Honour to his Merit, called it *Jerusalem*. Vid. *Selden de Jure Nat.* l. 3. c. 2. and *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar.* Vol. II. Exercit. 7.

* The same learned Author, who makes the *Melchisedeck* spoken of in Scripture, in one Sense to be *historical*, and in another *allegorical*, defines the *Historical* in these Words, — *Verus, & merus homo, ex Adamo & Noacho, per ejus Filium Chamum, & nepotem Canaanum, satus, Hierosolymæ Rex, veri Dei sacerdos, gratiâ communi omnibus fidelibus regeneratus & sanctificatus, atque ad beatam Resurrectionem, & vitam æternam obsequatus.* And the

Allegorical

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx.—xxv.
11.

The Prophecy concerning Ishmael explained, and justify'd.

improperly be reduc'd to this fingle Propofition, (b) *that Melchifedech was the moft illuftrious of his Family, and had neither Predeceffor, nor Succelfor in his Employ.*

WE readily grant indeed, that there is fomething very ftrange and uncommon in the Prophecy relating to *Ishmael*; but the Queftion is not concerning the *Singularity*, but the *Reality* rather of the Matters contained in it. If thefe are explicable in themfelves, and, upon Examination, found to be true, then is the Prophecy fo far from lofing its *Credit* upon the Account of its Strangeneff, that, for this very Reafon, it demonftrates its divine *Origin*; becaufe nothing, but an omnifcient Mind, could forefee Things fo ftrange and unaccountable; and nothing but an Almighty Power and Providence could bring thefe Things to pafs, and make the Event exactly agree with the Prediction.

Now, in order to explain the Prophecy itfelf, and thence to obferve how perfectly it has all along been fulfill'd, it muft be remember'd, that, (according to the known Stile of the *Old Testament*) what is here faid of *Ishmael* muft be chiefly underftood of his Descendants, in the fame Manner (c) as what *Jacob* predicts of *Judah*, and the reft of his Sons, was to relate to their Pofterity, and be indeed the Characteriftick of their feveral Tribes. And therefore (to take Notice of two of the moft odd and unaccountable Branches of his Character) *he will be a wild Man*, or a Man like *a wild Aff*; this (from the known Properties of that Creature) feveral Interpreters have resolv'd into thefe Qualities, — *Fierce, and cruel, loving Solitude, and hating Confinement of any Kind.*

How far this Part of the Character was verify'd in *Ishmael*, who liv'd in the Wilderneff, and became an expert *Archer*, his very Condition of Life fhews us; and how properly it belongs to his Pofterity, the *Arabians*, who, in every Nation, have very juftly obtained the Appellation of *wild*, a fmall Infpection into History will inform us.

To this very Day (as (d) *modern Travellers* do inform us) great Numbers of them live in the Defarts, and wander about

Allegorical in thefe of St Paul, — *Qui eft Rex Juftitiæ & Pacis, fine Patre, fine Matre, fine Genealogiâ, facerdos in perpetuum, & habens testimonium quod vivat.* Quæ omnia, ut jam annuimus, *fays he*, conveniunt *Melchifedeco*, in fenfu minutiore, & allegorico, & (ut patres amant loqui) καὶ οἰκονομίαν; Chriſto autem in Emphafi, & rei veritate. *Historia Patriar.* Vol. II. Exercit 2.

(b) *Outram* de Sacrificiis. (c) Gen. xlix. (d) Vid. *Rauwolf's Travels*, Part. ii. c. 3,

about from Place to Place, without any certain Habitation. They neither plow the Ground, nor apply themselves to any Kind of Husbandry, tho' there are several fruitful Places in the Wilderness, that would repay their Pains. Their whole Occupation (beside spoiling their Neighbours) lies in hunting, and killing wild Beasts, in which there are but few, that make use of Fire-Arms: The much greater Part of them make use of the *Bow*, and do herein imitate their great Progenitor, that they are the most exquisite *Archers* in the World.

BEFORE the Introduction of *Mahometanism*, they were as *vagrant* in their Lust, and as little restrain'd in the Use of Females, as the brutal Herd: And, even now, they take as many Wives, as do the *Turks*, i. e. as many as they can keep, whom they purchase of their Parents, use with Indifference, and dismiss at Pleasure. They rove about like the fiercest Beasts of Prey, seeking continually whom they may devour; insomuch, that the Governor of *Grand Cairo* is forced to keep a Guard of four thousand Horsemen every Night, on the Side of the City next the Wilderness, to secure it against their Incursions. Nor is the Wilderness only the Scene of their Depredations: They rove all over the *Southern* and *Eastern* Seas, visit every Creek, and Coast, and Island, and (as the (e) Historian compares them) come *souping* like an *Hawk*, with incredible Swiftness, upon their Prey, and are gone again in an Instant. And, as they have always thus prey'd upon Mankind, the necessary Consequence is, that they have always been at Variance and Hostility with them; and therein have made good the other Branch of *Ishmael's* Character, *His Hand shall be against every Man, and every Man's Hand against him*.

THERE is not the least Hint in Scripture, nor any Manner of Reason to believe, that *Ishmael* dwelt in a *personal* State of Hostility with his Brethren, nor is it conceivable, how he cou'd have maintain'd himself against their united Forces, had he so done; and therefore, this Prediction can no otherwise be understood, than as it relates to his Posterity, the *Arabians*. Now, that any one Nation should be of so singular and perverse a Character, as to set themselves in open Opposition to the rest of the World, and live in perpetual, profess'd Enmity with all Mankind; and that they shou'd continue to do so, not for one Age or two only, but for four thousand Years together, is surely the strangest

(e) *Ammianus Marcellinus*.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

strangest and most astonishing Prediction, that ever was read or heard of. And yet, if we attend a little to the History of these People (as soon as History takes notice of them) we shall find, in several Instances, a full Accomplishment of it.

WHEN *Alexander*, and his victorious Army over-ran a great Part of the *East*, the *Arabians* (as we are told by *Arrian*, and *Strabo*) of all the *Asiatics*, were the only People, who sent him no Ambassador, nor made any Submission to him; which Indignity he intended to have reveng'd in a particular Expedition against them, but was prevented by Death.

(f) WHAT *Alexander* intended, *Antigonus*, the greatest of his Successors, attempted; but he was repuls'd with Disgrace, and the Loss of above 8000 Men: And when, enrag'd at this Repulse, he made a second Attempt upon them with a Number of select Men, under the Command of his valiant Son *Demetrius*, the Resistance, he met with, was so obstinate, that he was forced to compound the Matter, and leave them in the quiet Possession of their Liberty and Peace.

WHEN the *Romans* and *Parthians* were Rivals for the Empire of the *East*, the *Arabians* join'd, and oppos'd each Nation, as they thought fit, but were never entirely devoted to either; for their Character always was, that they were *fickle*, if not *faithless* Friends, and *fierce* Enemies, who might be repuls'd, and repress'd for a Season, but could never be totally vanquish'd, or subdu'd.

MEN of this Character soon became the Objects of the *Roman* Enmity and Ambition, which could endure nothing that was free and independant; and accordingly several Attempts were set on Foot by *Pompey*, *Crassus*, and other great *Generals*, in order to enslave them; but all prov'd unsuccessful: And, tho' they are sometimes said to have been defeated, yet is there no Account, that we can properly depend on, until we come to the Expedition, which *Trajan* is known to have made against them.

(g) *TRAJAN* was certainly a long experienc'd and successful Warrior. He had subdued the *German*, humbled the *Parthian*, and reduc'd already one Part of *Arabia* into a Province; and yet, (b) when he came to besiege the City
of

(f) Vid. Dr. *Jackson* on the Creed. (g) *Dio*, Hist. l. 68.

(b) *Revelation* Examin'd, Vol. II. Dissertation 4.

of the *Hagarenes*, upon every Assault, * his Soldiers were so annoy'd with Whirl-Winds and Hail, and so frighten'd with Thunder and Lightening, and other Apparitions in the Air, (whilst their Meat was spoil'd and corrupted with Flies, even as they were eating it) that he was forced to give over the Siege, and was, not long after, seiz'd with a Disease, whereof he died.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

ABOUT eight Years after this, the Emperor *Severus*, a very valiant and prosperous Warrior, whom *Herodian* makes no Scruple to prefer even before *Cæſar*, *Marius*, and *Sylla*, diſdaining (as *Trajan* had done) that the *Hagarenes* ſhould ſtand out ſtill againſt the *Romans*, when all the reſt about them had yielded, beſieg'd their City (tho' it was but a ſmall one) twice, and was twice repulſ'd with Shame, and great Slaughter of his Men. In the ſecond Aſſault indeed, he beat down ſome of their City-Wall, and thereupon founded a Retreat, in Hopes that they would have capitulated, and ſurrender'd up the hidden Treafure, ſuppos'd to be conſecrated to the *Sun*: But when they continued reſolute a whole Day, without giving any Intimations of a Treaty for a Peace, on the Morrow following, the *Roman Army* was quite intimidated. The *Europeans*, who were gallant Men before, refus'd to enter the Breach; and the *Syrians*, who were forced to undertake that Service, had a grievous Repulſe: Whereupon the Emperor, * without making any
freſh

* The above-recited Author, from whom I have compil'd this Account, aſſures his Reader, that he had, with all the Care he cou'd, examin'd all the Accounts of *Arabia*, that came in his Way, to ſee whether the Phænomena, and Calamities, here mention'd by *Dio* to have diſtreſs'd the *Roman Army*, were frequent in that Region, and that he had never been able to meet with any Inſtance of one of them, except ſometimes Storms of Wind. If Hail, frightful Appearances in the Air, and Food infeſted with Flies, were ordinary Calamities in this Region, all the Accounts of the *Caravans*, that travel thro' the Deſerts, wou'd neceſſarily be full of them; whereas it is notorious, that the beſt Writers, who have left us faithful Diaries of theſe Affairs, do not ſo much as mention any of them; and therefore they muſt certainly have proceeded from a divine Interpoſition in Favour of the *Hagarenes*, in Accompliſhment of the Prediction concerning *Iſhmael* and his Poſterity.

* The Historian tells us farther, that, after the Breach was made, the Conqueſt of the City was deem'd ſo eaſy, that a certain Captain in the Army undertook to do it himſelf, if he might have

A. M. fresh Attack, decamped from before the City, and departed
 2108, &c. to *Palestine*: Thus God deliver'd the City, says Dio, re-
 Ant. Chris. calling the Soldiers by Severus, when they might have en-
 1896, &c. ter'd, and restraining Severus the second Day, by the Soldiers
 From Gen. Backwardness.
 xx—xxv.
 11.

THERE are only these two Things more, which we may observe from our Historian, worthy our Notice upon this Occasion: The first is, that the *Arabians* stood single, in this their Extremity, against the whole *Roman* Power; for none of their Neighbours wou'd assist them. The other Thing is, that the Emperor had Soldiers of all Nations in his Army; for, “whereas other Emperors, (i) says our Author, were contented with Guards of four different European Countries, Severus fill'd the City with a mixt Multitude of Soldiers of all Kinds, savage to look on, frightful to hear, and rude and wild to converse with.” So that, considering all Things, I think we may fairly conclude, that, *every Man's Hand was*, at this Time, *against Ishmael*, and his Hand, his only Hand, *against every Man's*; and yet he dwelt, and still dwelleth in the Presence of all his Brethren: For not long after this, it is very well known, that the *Ishmaelites* join'd the *Goths* against the *Romans*, and, having afterwards overcome both, * under the Name of

have but 550 *European* Soldiers assign'd him: But, where shall we find so many Soldiers? says the Emperor, meaning it of the Disobedience of the Army, to which he imputed his not carrying that Place. But now, how a Commander, who was at once belov'd and revered almost to Adoration by his Soldiers, cou'd not, with all his Authority, influence them to assault, when they were, in a Manner, at his Mercy, this can be no ways reconcil'd, without the Supposition of that Mighty Being occasioning it, who poureth, when he pleases, Contempt upon Princes, and bringeth their Counsels to nought.

(i) *Ammianus Marcellinus*.

* The *Ishmaelites*, as some imagine, upon the Reproaches of the *Jews*, who upbraided them with *Bastardy*, became ashamed of their old Names, deriv'd from *Hagar* and *Ishmael*, which carried an Odium in the Sound, and took upon them the Name of *Saracens*, desiring to be accounted as the Descendants of *Abraham* by his Wife *Sarah*; but what destroys this *Etymology* is this, that the Antients call'd them *Sara-kenoi*, and not *Saraceni*, as they must have been call'd, if their Name had been deriv'd from *Sarah*; and therefore the learned *Scaliger* supposes the Word to come from the *Arabick* Word, *Sarack*, which signifies to steal or plunder. *Calmet's Dictionary*.

of *Saracens*, they erected a vast Empire upon their Ruins; A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Christ. 1896, &c. and thus *Ishmael*, in the full Extent of the Prophecy, became From Gen. xi. a great Nation.

CIRCUMCISION is the cutting off the Fore-skin, of the Member, which, in every Male, is the Instrument of Generation; and, whoever considers the Nature of this Operation, painful, if not indecent in those of Maturity, and to such, as live in hot Countries, highly inconvenient, if not dangerous; an Operation, wherein we can perceive no Footsteps of human Invention, as having no Foundation either in Reason, or Nature, or Necessity, or the Interest of any particular Set of Men, we must needs conclude, that Mankind cou'd never have put such a Severity upon themselves, unless they had been enjoin'd, and directed to it by a divine Command. Nay, this single Instance of *Abraham*, who, in the advanc'd Age of *ninety-nine*, underwent this hazardous Operation, and the very Indecency of it, in a Man of his Years and Dignity; these two Considerations are in the Place of ten thousand Proofs, that it was forc'd upon him; but Nothing, but the irresistible Authority of God, could be a Force sufficient in those Circumstances. So that the Strangeness and Singularity of this Ordinance is so far from being an Argument against it, that it is an evident Proof of its divine Institution; and, what was originally instituted by God, cannot in Strictness be accounted *immodest* (tho' we perhaps may have some such Conception of it) since *(k) unto the Pure all Things are pure, but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but even their Mind and Conscience is defiled.*

THE *Egyptians* indeed, (as *(l) Herodotus* informs us) pretended to practise this Rite, from no other Principle, but that of *Cleanliness*; and possibly, at that Time, they might so far have lost the Memorial of its true Origin, as not to retain any other Reason for their Observation of it: But since it is evident to a Demonstration, that they might, to all Intents and Purposes, be as clean without this Rite, as with it, 'tis absurd to suppose, that any Man of common Sense shou'd undergo Pain, and Hazard himself, and force the same Inconveniences upon his Posterity, merely for the Attainment of an End, which cou'd as fully and perfectly have been accomplish'd without it.

THERE is a Passage indeed in the same *Herodotus*, where- Not found in he tells us, " That the Colchians, the Egyptians, and first among the Egyptians.

(k) Tit. i. 15. (l) Lib. 2.

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Christ. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx—xxv. 11. “ the *Ethiopians*, were the only Nations, that circumcised from the Beginning, and that the *Syrians* and *Phœnicians*, who liv’d in *Palestine*, acknowledg’d they borrow’d that Rite from them.” But here the Historian is less to be blam’d for having run into this Error, since the *Egyptians* were a People naturally so vain, and conceited of their Antiquity, that they chose rather to impose upon him by a false Information (for all this Account he had but from Information) than confess that they receiv’d Circumcision from any other People. In the other Part of the Story ’tis manifest, that they did impose upon him, when they told him that the Inhabitants of *Palestine* (whom he calls *Syrians* and *Phœnicians*) confess’d, that they receiv’d Circumcision from them; whereas there were no Inhabitants in *Palestine* circumcis’d but the *Jews*, and these always profess’d to have receiv’d it directly from *Abraham*.

(m) *HERODOTUS* indeed, in all his Writings, has shewn, that he was a great Stranger to the Affairs of the *Jews*, and much more to the History of the Patriarchs, who so long preceded the Institution of their Republick. What he tells us of the Origin of Circumcision, viz. that it was among the *Egyptians* from the Beginning, is in a loose and vagrant Expression, accidentally dropt from him, or rather contriv’d on Purpose to conceal his Ignorance of the Matter: Whereas *Moses*, who was long before him, knew the History of the Patriarchs, and particularly that of *Abraham*; and therefore he does not content himself with popular or fabulous Reports, or endeavour to conceal his Meaning under indefinite and general Expressions, but marks out the particular Period, and gives us a plain and full Account both of the Causes and Circumstances of the whole Institution. The Truth is, there is no Comparison between the two Historians in this Particular; and therefore, if we will credit the sacred Penman in a Point, wherein his Knowledge could hardly be defective, so far were the *Egyptians* from prescribing to the *Hebrews* in the Rite of Circumcision, that, when *Abraham* was in *Egypt*, there was no such Custom then in Use.

Not in Egypt in Abraham’s Time. IT was twenty Years after his Return from that Country, that God enjoyn’d him the Rite of Circumcision; and then it is said, that (n) *Abraham* took *Ishmael* his Son, and all that

that were born in his House, and all that were bought with his Money, and circumcised the Flesh of their Fore-skin. A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. xi. Now it is evident, that when he came out of Egypt he brought Men-Servants and Maid-Servants with him in abundance; and therefore, unless we can suppose that all these Egyptian Men-Servants died within twenty Years, when the ordinary Period of Life was at least an Hundred; or that, when they died, none of them left any Male-Issue behind them; we cannot but conclude, that Circumcision was not known in Egypt in Abraham's Time, because it is expressly said, that every Male, among the Men of Abraham's House, was circumcised at the same Time that he was, which could never have been, had they undergone that Operation before.

AT what Time the Rite of Circumcision obtain'd in Egypt, is not so easy a Matter to determine; there is a Passage however in the Prophet *Jeremiah*, which, if taken in a literal Sense, is far from encouraging any high Pretensions to Antiquity: (o) *Behold, the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will punish all them, that are circumcis'd, with the uncircumcis'd; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the Children of Ammon, and Moab, &c. for all these Nations are uncircumcis'd, and all the House of Israel are uncircumcis'd in their Heart:* The plain Sense of which Words is this,—That God would visit the House of Israel like strange Nations; because, as the latter were uncircumcis'd in the Flesh, so the former were in the Heart. Not but that, in the Days of *Jeremiah*, the Rite of Circumcision was known and practis'd among the Egyptians, as well as among other Nations; but then it was not so common and general, nor was it at all us'd any where, till long after Abraham's Days.

ONE probable Opinion therefore is, that the *Arabians* receiv'd it from the *Ishmaelites*; that the *Egyptians* receiv'd it from the *Arabians*, or perhaps from Abraham's Children by *Keturah*; and that from the *Egyptians* the People of *Colchis*, knowing themselves to be of Egyptian Extract, embrac'd it, in Imitation of their illustrious Ancestors. But even suppose that this Custom was not established in Egypt by the Posterity either of *Hagar*, or *Keturah*; yet why might not *Joseph*, in the Course of a most absolute Ministry for fourscore Years together, be able to introduce

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv;
11.

it? (p) 'Tis the Practice, we know, nay, 'tis the Pride of Slaves to imitate their Master's Manners, especially if he seems solicitous to have them do so; and therefore we need not doubt, but that, upon the least Intimation of his Pleasure, the *Egyptians* would readily embrace the religious Rites of so great, so wise, so powerful a Minister, who had preserv'd every one of their Lives, who had sav'd the whole Kingdom from Ruin, and was himself so visibly, and remarkably guided by the Spirit of God. But whensoever, or from whomsoever it was, that the *Egyptians* learned this Rite, 'tis certain, that the Reason of its Institution was not with them the same, that it was among the *Jews*, and therefore the Circumcision itself must not be accounted the same.

The Reasons
and Ends of
its Institution.

WHOSOEVER looks into the life of *Abraham*, will soon perceive, that God did, all along, design him for a Pattern of Faith and perfect Obedience, to all succeeding Generations. (q) The more his Faith was tried, the more illustrious it became, and the more Obstacles there were rais'd in the Accomplishment of the divine Promises, the more the good Patriarch shew'd (in surmounting these Obstacles) the high Conception he had entertain'd of him, from whom these Promises came. For, after a Promise of a numerous Posterity, why was it so long before he gave him any Son at all? After the Birth of *Ishmael*, why so long before the Promise of an Heir by his Wife *Sarah*? And after that Promise was given, why so long, even till the Thing was impossible, in an ordinary Course of Nature, before the Promise was accomplish'd, and the Child sent? All this was to exercise his Faith, and to give him an Opportunity of shewing to the World, how fully he was convinc'd, that, notwithstanding all these Impediments and Delays, God would certainly, by one Means or other, effectually make good his Promises. The like may be said of the Command of *Circumcision*. God did not only defer, for the Space of twenty whole Years, the Birth of that Son, who was so solemnly promis'd, and so impatiently desir'd, but even, when that Time was expir'd, and *Abraham* might now justly hope to see the Promise accomplish'd, and his Faith crown'd; God was pleas'd to cross it again, by requiring of him the Performance of an Act, which, in

in all Appearance, would be a total Defeat to all his Hopes. For this Injunction, *My Covenant shall be in your Flesh*, to a Man of advanc'd Age, seems as opposite to the Promise of having a Son, as that other of *taking his Son, his only Son Isaac, and offering him up for a Burnt-Sacrifice*, was to the Promise of his being the Father of a numerous Posterity.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx. xxv. 11.

BUT *Abraham's Faith* triumph'd over this, as well as all other Obstacles. He immediately perform'd the Operation, notwithstanding its Oddness, its Danger, its seeming Indecency, and the apparent Opposition it had to the divine Promises : And, 'tis to preserve the Remembrance of the Faith of their great Ancestor, who, in so many discouraging Circumstances, *waited patiently on God, and against Hope believ'd in Hope* (as the Apostle expresses it) that God prescrib'd to the *Jewish Nation* the Sacrament of Circumcision. For this was a farther End of its Institution, not only to be a *Mark of Distinction* between the Posterity of *Abraham*, and all other Nations, but a *Token* likewise of God's Covenant made with him, and his Posterity, and a *Note of Commemoration* to put those, who bore it, continually in mind, whose Offspring they were, and what Advantages entitled to upon that Account, provided they took Care not to degenerate from the Glories of that Stock, from whence they sprang.

AND indeed, considering that *Abraham* was the first, we read of, whom God rescued from the general Corruption of Faith and Manners, which the World had now, a second Time, relaps'd into ; and considering withal, that this Person and his Posterity were singled out for a *chosen Generation*, the *Repository* of Truth, and the *Receptacle* of God *incarnate* ; there was Reason in Abundance, why this Remembrance should be very grateful to them : And apt enough, 'tis plain, upon all Occasions, they were to value themselves and despise others, upon the Account of so particular an Honour. (r) But the Misfortune was, the most useful Part of the Reflection, *viz.* the eminent Faith and ready Obedience of so renown'd an Ancestor, and the noble Emulation of his Virtues, which such a Pattern ought to have inspir'd ; this they were too apt to overlook, tho' any considering Man (as the Apostle (s) excellently argues)

F 3

could

(r) *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels.

(s) *Rom. iv.*

A. M. could not but perceive, that the only valuable Relation to
 2063, &c. *Abraham* is not that of *Consanguinity*, and natural Descent,
 Ant. Christ. but the Resemblance of his Virtues, and claiming under him
 1896, &c. as the *Father of the Faithful*.
 From Gen. as the *Father of the Faithful*.
 xx--xxv. 1.

AND this suggests another, and indeed none of the least considerable Ends, for which Circumcision was instituted; viz. to be a *Sign* of inward Virtue, and to figure out to us some particular Dispositions of Mind, which bore Resemblance to the outward Ceremony, and were requir'd to render it effectual; for which Reason it is, that we read so much in the *old Law* (t), of *circumcising the Foreskin of the Heart*, and hear the Apostle so frequently telling us, in the *new*, (u) of *putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh by the Circumcision of Christ*; (x) *for he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly, neither is that Circumcision, which is outward in the Flesh; but he is a Jew, who is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God.*

Abraham's
 Conquest of
 the four
 Kings ac-
 counted for.

IT may seem a little strange at first perhaps, that *Abraham*, whose Course of Life was *retir'd* and *philosophical*, shou'd, all on a sudden, commence so great a Warrior, as to be able to defeat four Kings, at once, and their victorious Armies, with a small Number of his *Domesticks*, and some Assistance, that was given him by his Neighbours. His own Men were *three hundred and eighteen*; and what Force his Confederates, the three *Phœnician* Princes, brought to his Assistance, we do not find mention'd. We may probably enough suppose, that they did not exceed his own *Domesticks*; but then we are not oblig'd to affirm, that he fell upon the whole Body of the *Assyrian* Army with this small Retinue. This certainly wou'd have been too bold an Attempt for the little Company, which he commanded, and therefore the more likely Supposition is,—— That coming up with them by Night, he divid'd his Men into two or three Parties, the better to make a Diversion, and conceal his Strength; that with *one* Party himself might attack the Head Quarters of King *Chedorlaomer*, where the chief Feasting and Revelling was kept for Joy of their late Victories; that with *another* he might fall upon those; who were appointed to guard the Captives and the Spoil; and
 with

(t) Deut. x. 16.
 28, 29.

(u) Col. ii. 11.

(x) Rom. ii.

with a *third* might be beating up other Quarters; so that the *Affyrians*, being fatigu'd in their late Battle, surpriz'd at finding a new Enemy, and not knowing what their Number or Strength might be, or where their principal Attack was to begin, might endeavour to save themselves by Flight; which *Abraham* perceiving might take the Advantage of their Fright, and pursue them, until he had made himself Master of the Prisoners and the Spoil, and then retire himself, as not thinking it adviseable to follow them until the Day-light might discover the Weakness of his Forces.

ALL this might well enough be done by a common Stratagem in War, without any miraculous Interposition of Providence: But it is much more likely, that the same God, (y) who, in After-Ages, instructed one of his Posterity, even with such another little Handful of Men, not only to break an Army of about two or three hundred thousand, but to kill of them, upon the Spot, no fewer, than an hundred and twenty Thousand; to disperse, at least, as many more; to vanquish, after this, a Party of fifteen Thousand that had retir'd in a Body; and, at last, to take all the four Kings, who were the Leaders of this *numerous*, or rather *numberless* Army (z); 'tis much more likely, I say, that the God of *Abraham* wou'd not be wanting to his Servant in his Counsels, and Suggestions upon this important Occasion: And, if a Party of three hundred Men, under the Conduct of a Person every way inferior to *Abraham*, was, by a Stratagem in the Night, and by the Help of a sudden *Panick*, which God injected, enabled to defeat four mighty Princes, and to make such a prodigious Slaughter in their Camp; I cannot see, why a Person of that consummate Wisdom, and so highly favour'd by God with extraordinary Monitions upon all remarkable Emergencies, as *Abraham* was, might not, by God's Advice, make use of some such Stratagem, as *Gideon* did, tho' the Scripture is herein silent, that the Success might be imputed to the Operation of Faith in him, and not to the Agency of second Causes, or, what some call, the *Chance of War*.

OF what Age *Isaac* was, when *Abraham* was order'd to offer him up, is no where declar'd in Scripture. The Opinion of some learned *Jews*, that he was but twelve Years old, is ridiculous; since, at that Age, it wou'd have

F 4

been

(y) Judges, at the viith and viiith Chapters. *Ibica Bib.* Vol. I. Occas. Annot. 19.

(z) *Biblia-*

A. M. 2103, &c.
Ant. Chris. 1896, &c.
From Gen. xx—xxv. 11.

Why Isaac submitted to be sacrificed.

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx—xxv. 11.
 been impossible for him to have carry'd such a Load of Wood, as was requisite upon that Occasion: And others run into a contrary Extreme, by supposing, that he was then seven and thirty Years of Age, which must have been the Year, wherein his Mother died, and yet she is said to have been alive when this Transaction happen'd. *Josephus* indeed makes him five and twenty, and some *Christian* (both antient and modern) Commentators suppose, that he was past thirty; but whatever his Age might be, 'tis acknowledg'd, that he was capable of making Resistance, and wou'd certainly have done it, had he not been very well satisfy'd, that the Command came from God. To this Purpose the * *Jewish* Historian introduces *Abraham*, as making a very tender and pathetick Speech to his Son; inspiring him with a just Contempt of Life; and exhorting him to a due Submission to the divine Order and Decree;

* The Words, wherein *Josephus* makes *Abraham* address his Son upon this Occasion, are these:—"My dear Son, thou hast been the Child of many Prayers to me, and, since thy Coming into the World, I have spar'd for Nothing in thy Nurture and Education. There is not any Happiness, I have more wished for, than to see thee settled in a consummated State of Age and Reason; and, whenever God shall take me to himself, to leave thee in Possession of my Authority and Dominions. But, since it has been the Will of God, first to bestow thee upon me, and now to call thee back again, my dear Son, acquit thyself generously under so pious a Necessity. It is to God that thou art dedicated, and deliver'd up on this Occasion, and it is the same God that now requires thee of me, in Return for all the Blessings and Favours he hath shower'd down upon us, both in War and Peace. 'Tis agreeable to the Law of Nature, for every one that is born, to die; and a more glorious End thou canst never have, than to fall by the Hand of thy own Father, a Sacrifice to the God and Father of the Universe, who hath rather chosen to receive thy Soul into a blessed Eternity, upon the Wings of Prayer, and ardent Ejaculations, than to suffer thee to be taken away by Sicknes, War, Passion, or any other of the common Chances of Mankind. Consider it well, and thou wilt find, that in that heavenly Station, to which thou art now call'd, thou mayest make thyself the true support of thy aged Father, and that, instead of my Son *Isaac*, I shall have God himself for my Guardian." Antiq. l. 1. c. 14.

Decree; to all which *Isaac* attended (says our Author) with a Constancy and Resignation, becoming the Son of such a Father: And upon this their mutual Behaviour, (a) a very eloquent Father of the *Greek Church* has made this beautiful Reflection: "All the Strength of reluctant Love could not with-hold the Father's Hands, and all the Horror of a *Dissolution* cou'd not tempt the Son to move for his own Preservation. Which of the two, shall we say, deserves the Precedence in our Wonder and Veneration? For there seems to be a religious Emulation, or Contest between them, which should most remarkably signalize himself; the Father, in loving God more than his own Child, and the Son, in the Love of Duty above his own Life."

THIS is a gallant Instance of a profound Submission to the divine Will; and yet (not to detract from the Merit of it) if we consider the Matter coolly, it was no more, than what many *Martyrs*, even under the *Jewish* Oeconomy, equally have perform'd. They have given themselves up, in Testimony of their Love to God, to Deaths as cruel, as terrible, as this, which *Isaac* was to suffer; (b) *They were stoned, were saw'd asunder, were tortur'd; and yet they accepted not Deliverance, that they might inherit a joyful Resurrection.*

THE *Metamorphosis* of *Lot's Wife* is one of the most wonderful Events in Scripture, and therefore those, who are unwilling, as they say, to multiply Miracles without a Cause, from the different Senses, which the Words in the Text are capable of, have endeavour'd to affix another Interpretation to them. Thus the Word, which we render *Pillar*, or *Statue*, besides its obvious Signification, may, in a *metaphorical* Sense, be applied to denote any Thing, that, like a *Pillar*, or *Stone*, is *immoveable* and *hard*; and, according to this Acceptation, these Interpreters suppose, that *Moses* might intend no more, than that *Lot's Wife* was struck dead with Fear, or Surprise, or any other Cause, and so remain'd motionless, like a *Stone*.

IN like Manner, (c) the Word, which we render *Salt*, besides its common Signification, does sometimes denote a *dry and barren Soil*, such as is found about the *Asphaltic Lake*: And thus the Sense of the Words, applied to *Lot's Wife*, intimates, that the Place of her Death was in a barren

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

Various Opinions concerning the Pillar of Salt.

(a) *Gregor. Nyss. de Deitate Fil. & Spirit. Sanct. p. 908.*
(b) *Heb. xi. 35, 37.* (c) *Vid. Le Clerc's Dissert. in Locum.*

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx—xxv. 13.

barren Country, or in the Land of Salt. At other Times it signifies a *long Space*, or *Continuance of Time*, because (*d*) we find an *everlasting Covenant* call'd a *Covenant of Salt*, (Salt being therefore an Emblem of *Eternity*, because the Things that are season'd therewith, continue incorrupt for many Years) and in this Sense *Lot's Wife* may be said to become an (*e*) *everlasting Monument* of the divine Displeasure, without any Consideration either of the *Form* or *Matter*, whereinto she was chang'd: And from these Significations of the Words, they draw this Explication of the Passage.—“ That *Lot's Wife*, either looking “ back upon the City, when she saw it all in a Smoak, “ and Fire from Heaven pouring down upon it, was struck “ dead with the frightful Sight, in a Country, that was “ afterwards barren and unfruitful: Or that, not only “ stopping, but returning towards the City (when the “ Angel was gone) she was suffocated by some poisonous “ Vapour, and perish'd in the common Conflagration.” And this, *as they say*, saves a Miracle, and answers the End of Providence full as well, as if the Woman had actually been turn'd into a *Pillar of Salt*, which never was, and never will be prov'd by any authentick Testimony.

ALL this is plausible enough; and yet those, who adhere to the *literal* Sense of the Words, have this to say in their Vindication,— That the Vale of *Siddim*, where *Sodom*, and the other Cities stood, was originally a very fruitful Soil (as most bituminous Countries are) which induc'd *Lot* to make Choice of it for the Pasturage of his Cattle, but is, at present, the very Reverse, a poor barren Land, full of Sulphur and Salt-pits: And hence they infer, that all the sulphureous and saline Matter, which is found in this Tract of Ground now, was the Effect of divine Vengeance, and shower'd down upon it, when God destroyed *Sodom*, and its neighbouring Cities. They therefore suppose, that the Woman, standing still too long to behold the Destruction of her Country, some of that dreadful Shower, in the Manner of great *Fleaks* of Snow, fell upon her, and, clinging to her Body, wrapp'd it all over, as it were in a Sheet of *nitrosulphureous* Matter, which congeal'd into a Crust as hard as a Stone, and made her appear like a Statue

(*d*) Numb. xviii. 19.

(*e*) Deut. xxix. 23.

Statue or Pillar of † *metallick* Salt, having her Body enclosed, and, as it were, *candied* all over with it. And, to maintain this their Hypothesis, they assert, That all *indurated* Bodies (as *Chymists* well know) are (as they speak) highly *saturated* with a *saline* Principle, and that all Coagulations and Concretions, in the Mixture of Bodies, are effected by this Means: So that it was not possible to express such a Transmutation as *Lot's Wife* underwent, whether it was simply by *Incrustation*, or by a total *Penetration*, more properly, than *Moses* has done. They produce Instances from the best Historians of several *Petrifications*, both of Men and Cattle (almost as wonderful as this of *Lot's Wife*) standing in the very same Posture, wherein they were found at the Instant of their Transmutation, for several Generations afterwards; and, for the Confirmation of this in particular, they vouch the Testimony of the Author of the *Book of Wisdom*, who makes mention of a *standing Pillar of Salt*, as a *Monument of an unbelieving Soul*, and the Authority of the LXX Interpreters, who expressly render it so. Among *Jewish* Writers, they cite the Words (*f*) of *Josephus*, who tells us, that *Lot's Wife*, casting her Eye perpetually back upon the City, and being too much concern'd about it, contrary to what God had forbid her, was turn'd into a Pillar of Salt, which I myself, as he tells us, have seen: They cite the Words of *Philo*, who frequently takes notice of this *Metamorphosis*, and, in his *Allegories of the Law*, more particularly, declares, that, for the Love of Sodom, *Lot's Wife* was turn'd into a Stone: And among *Christian* Writers, they produce that Passage of *Clemens*, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*; *Lot's Wife* went along with him, but being of a different Spirit, and

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

† Most of the Interpreters have observ'd to us, that we must not take the *Salt*, here mention'd, for common Salt, which Water soon dissolves, and cou'd not possibly continue long, being expos'd to the Wind and Rain; but for *metallick* Salt, which was hewn out of the Rock, like Marble, and made use of in building Houses, according to the Testimony of several Authors. *Watfius*, Miscell. Tom. 1. and *Pliny* (l. 31. c. 7.) tell us, that in *Africa*, not far from *Utica*, there are vast Heaps of Salt, like Mountains, which, when once harden'd by the Sun and Moon, cannot be dissolv'd with Rain, or any other Liquor, nor penetrated with any Kind of Instrument made with Iron. *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 8.

(*f*) Antiq. l. 1. c. 12.

A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. 11. and not persisting in Concord with him, she was therefore placed for a Sign, and continues a Statue of Salt to this very Day; together with the Testimony of Irenæus, and several other Fathers of the Church.

THE Accounts, which modern Historians and Travellers give us of this Matter, are so very different and uncertain, that we cannot so well tell where to fix our Belief. *Bochart*, in his Description of the *Holy Land*, tells us, that he gave himself the Fatigue of a very troublesome Journey, to behold this Statue, but was not so happy as to satisfy his Curiosity; for the Inhabitants assur'd him the Place was inaccessible, and cou'd not be visited without apparent Danger of Death, because of the prodigious Beasts and Serpents that abounded there, but more especially, because of the *Bidui*, a very savage and inhuman Sort of People, that dwelt near it: And yet, if we will believe other Writers of this Kind, they will tell us expressly, that there is still some Part of it remaining, and to be seen, between *Engaddi* and the *Dead-Sea*.

WE will suppose however for once, that the long Duration of this Monument is an Imposition of the Inhabitants upon the Credulity of Strangers; yet it will not therefore follow, that there never was any such Thing in being, unless we can think it inconsistent with the Nature of God to work a Miracle for the Punishment of a wicked Woman. Miracles indeed are not to be multiplied, unless there be Occasion for them: But, when the plain Sense of the Words leads us to such a Construction, 'tis a Niceness, I think, no way commendable, to endeavour to find out another, merely for the Sake of avoiding the Miraculousness of the Fact; as if the Scriptures were more valuable, for containing Nothing but obvious Matters, and the *Majesty* of God any way magnify'd, by seeming to exert as little of its *omnipotent* Power, as possible.

THE short of the Matter is this, — We have a clear Account in a Book full of Wonders, of a Woman, confessedly guilty of Disobedience and Ingratitude, struck dead by the Hand of God, and turn'd into a Statue of Salt for a Monument of Terror to future Generations. And, is there any Thing in this so repugnant to Reason, or so incongruous for God to do, that we must immediately flee to another Interpretation, and to make the Matter easy, resolutely maintain, that the whole Purport of the Thing is only this, — That the poor Woman either suddenly died of a Fright, or indiscreetly fell into the Fire? God certainly may work a Miracle when he pleases, and punish any wicked Person in what Manner

Manner he thinks fit; nor is there any more Wonder in the *Metamorphosis* of Lot's Wife, than there was in changing the Rod of *Moses* into a Serpent. The same Power might do both; and since the same History has recorded both, there is the same Reason for the Credibility of both. Nay, of the two, the Transformation of Lot's Wife seems more familiar to our Conceptions, * since we want not Instances, as I said before, of Persons struck with Lightening, and kill'd with cold Vapours, that have immediately petresfy'd in the same Manner.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1869, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

WHY she was turn'd into a Body of Salt, rather than any other Substance, is only resolveable into the good Pleasure of God. The Conjectures of *Jewish* Writers upon this Head, we acknowledge, are trifling; nor are we responsible for the *Reveries* of such *Christian* Commentators, as wou'd crou'd in a Multitude of palpable Absurdities, merely to make the Miracle more portentous: But, why God exacted so severe a Penalty for an Offence so seemingly small, is not so hard to be resolv'd; because, according to the Light, wherein we are to consider this Woman, her Disobedience to the divine Command had in it all the Malignity of an obstinate and perverse Mind, unthankful to God for his Preservation

Why God
punish'd
Lot's Wife
so severely.

* *Bisselius* [in his *Argon. Americ. l. 14. c. 2.*] has a very remarkable Story to this Purpose: He tells us, that *Badicus Amalgrus*, who was the first Man that ever march'd an Army over the Mountains between *Peru* and *Chili*, by the Extremity of the Cold, and Unwholsomness of the Air, lost, in that Expedition, a great many Men. Being oblig'd however, some few Months after, to return the same Way, what the Historian tells us upon this Occasion is very wonderful — Stabant adhuc equites peditesque, qui, quinto ante mense, obriguerunt, immoti, inconsumpti, situ, formâ, habitu, quo repentina pestis quemque alligaverat. Alius pronus, humi stratus, alius rectus, non nemo videbatur inferta manibus fræna quassare. Ad summam, invenit eos tales, quales reliquerat; odore nullo tetro, colore non solito funeribus, ac, nisi quod anima dudum intercidisset, cætera spirantibus, quam extinctis, similiores. To the like Purpose it is related by *Aventinus*, (*Annot. Bavar. l. 7.*) a credible Historian, that, in his Time, above fifty Country People, with their Cows and Calves, in *Carinthia*, were all destroy'd at once by a strong suffocating Exhalation, which immediately after an Earthquake (in the Year 1348) ascended out of the Earth, and reduc'd them to *saline Statues*, such as that of Lot's Wife, which, he tells us, were seen both by himself, and by the Chancellor of *Austria*. *Bibliotheca Bibl. Vol. I. Occas. Annot. 22.*

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xii.-xxv. 11.

of her, and too closely attach'd, if not to the wicked Customs, at least to the Persons and Things, which she had left behind her in that Sink of Sin and Sensuality.

BUT there is another Observation, which we may draw (g) from our Saviour's Application of this Story, as well as (h) the Angel's Expressions to *Lot*, viz. that she loiter'd by the Way, if not return'd to the City; and if so, 'tis no Wonder that she suffer'd, when she was found within the Compass of the *sulphureous* Streams from Heaven; nor can God be blam'd for his exemplary Punishment of her, unless we think it reasonable for his Providence, in this Case, to have interpos'd, and wrought a Miracle for *her* Preservation, who had so little deserv'd it, and had run herself voluntarily into the Jaws of Destruction.

Heathen Testimonies to the same Purpose.

THUS we have endeavour'd to vindicate the Character of the Patriarch *Abraham*, and to account for several Transactions and Passages in Scripture, which seem to give Umbrage to Infidelity, during the Compass of his Life. And for the Confirmation of all this, we might now produce the Testimony of *profane* Authors, and make it appear, that *Abraham's* Fame for a just, virtuous, and religious Man, is spoken of by *Berosus* in a Fragment preserv'd (i) by *Josephus*: That his being born in *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, his Removal into *Canaan*, and afterwards Sojourning in *Egypt*, is related by *Eupolemus*, as he is quoted (k) by *Eusebius*: That the Captivity of his Nephew *Lot*, his Victory over the four Kings, and honourable Reception by *Melchisedeck*, King of the sacred City of *Argarize*, and Priest of God, are recorded by the same Author: That his marrying two Wives, one an *Egyptian*, by whom he had a Son, who was the Father of twelve Kings in *Arabia*, and the other a Woman of his own Kindred, by whom he had likewise one Son, whose Name in Greek was *Γελάς*, which answers exactly to the *Hebrew* Word, *Isaac*; and that this *Isaac* he was commanded to sacrifice, but, when he was going to kill him, was stopp'd by an Angel, and offer'd a *Ram* in his Stead; all this is related by *Antiphanus*, as he is quoted (l) by the same *Eusebius*: That the antient Custom of *Circumcision* is taken notice of (m) by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, and others: That the Burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the strange Waste it has

(g) Luke xvii. 31, 32. (h) Gen. xix. 22. (i) Antiq. l. 1. c. 8. (k) Præpar. Evang. l. 9. c. 17. (l) Ibid. c. 18. (m) Hug. Grot. de Veritate.

has made in a once most beautiful Country, is describ'd (n) A. M. 2108, &c. Ant. Chris. 1896, &c. From Gen. xx—xxv. by *Strabo*, *Tacitus*, and *Solinus*: That (o) *Isaac's* being born to a Father, when old, and to a Mother, incapable of Conception, gave occasion of the Story of the miraculous Birth of *Orion*, by the Help of the Gods, even when his Father *Hyreus* had no Wife at all: That *Lot's* kind Reception of the two Angels in *Sodom*, his protecting them from the Insults of the People, and escaping thereupon the Destruction that beset them, are all well delineated in the common Fable of *Baucis* and *Philemon*: And (to mention no more) that the Fate of his Wife for her looking back upon *Sodom*, and her being thereupon chang'd into a Statue of *metallick* Salt, gave Rise to the Poet's Fiction of the Loss of *Eurydice*, and her Remission into Hell, for her Husband's turning to look upon her, and of *Niobe's* being chang'd into a Stone, for resenting the Death of her Children. So well has infinite Wisdom provided, that the sacred Truths of divine Revelation should not only be supported by the Attestation of all antient History, but preserv'd likewise even in the Vanity and Extravagance of Fables; for even *they*, O Lord, *shew the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy Power; that thy Power, thy Glory, and the Mightiness of thy Kingdom might be known unto Men.*

DISSERTATION I.

Of the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

OF all God's Judgments upon the Wicked, next to *The Reality* that of the universal Deluge, the Destruction of *Sodom*, of *it*. and the neighbouring Cities in the Plain of *Jordan*, seems to be one of the most remarkable, and the most dreadful Interpositions of Providence; and may therefore, in this Place, deserve a particular Consideration.

THAT this *Catastrophe* (as (p) the Apostle calls it) did really happen, according to the Account, which *Moses* gives us of it, we have the concurring Testimony of all Historians, both *antient* and *modern*, to convince us. (q) *Diodorus Siculus*, after having given us a Description of the Lake *Asphaltites* (which now fills the Place, where these Cities once stood) acquaints us, that the adjacent Country was then on Fire, and sent forth a grievous Smell, to which he imputes

(n) *Hug. Grot. de Veritate.* (o) *Huet. Quæst. Alnetan.*
1. 2. (p) 2 Pet. ii. 6. (q) *Lib, 19.*

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.



imputes the sickly and short Lives of the neighbouring Inhabitants. (r) *Strabo*, having made mention of the same Lake, pursues his Account, and tells us, that the craggy and burnt Rocks, the Caverns broken in, and the Soil all about it adust, and turn'd to Ashes, give Credit to a Report among the People, that formerly several Cities stood there, (whereof *Sodom* was the chief) but that by Earthquakes, and Fire breaking out, there were some of them entirely swallow'd up, and others forsaken by the Inhabitants, that could make their Escape. (s) *Tacitus* describes the Lake much in the same Manner with these other Historians, and then adds, that not far from it are Fields, now barren, which were reported formerly to have been very fruitful, and adorn'd with large Cities, which were burnt by Lightning, and do still retain the Traces of their Destruction. (t) *Solinus* is clearly of Opinion, that the Blackness of the Soil, and its being turn'd into Dust and Ashes, is a sure Token of its having suffer'd by Fire from Heaven; and, if we may believe the Report of (u) a late Traveller, according to the Account which he had from the Inhabitants themselves, some of the Ruins of these ancient Cities do still appear, whenever the Water is low and shallow.

The Number
of Cities,
that were
destroyed.

WHAT the Number of these Cities were, is a Matter, wherein we can have no absolute Certainty. *Moses*, in the Text, makes mention but of two, *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*; but, in another Place, he enumerates *four*, and gives this Description of their dreadful Punishment. (x) *When the Generations to come shall see the Plague of that Land, and the Sicknesses, which the Lord hath laid upon it, and that the whole Land thereof is Brimstone, and Salt, and Burning like the Overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrhah, Abnoth, and Zeboim, (which the Lord overthrew in his Anger, and in his Wrath) even all the Nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the Land? Nay, if we will believe (y) the Historian above-cited, and who perhaps might have an Account of the Thing from some Phœnician Writer, the Number of the Cities, which, at this Time, were destroy'd, were thirteen; and to this there is a Passage in the Prophet, which seems to give some Countenance, tho' not as to the precise Number of them: (z) As I live, saith the Lord God to Jerusalem, Sodom, thy Sister, has not*

(r) Lib. 10. (s) Lib. 5. (t) Chap. xxxv. (u) Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem. (x) Deut. xxix. 22, 23, 24. (y) *Strabo*, l. 16. (z) Ezek. xvi. 48.

not done, she nor her Daughters (i. e. the Cities, which were built round it, and were tributary to it) have not done, as thou and thy Daughters have done. But, whatever the Number of the Cities might be, it will be proper for us, before we come to enquire in what Manner they were destroyed, to give some Account of their Situation.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

(a) THE Plain of *Jordan* includes the greatest Part of the flat Country, thro' which the River *Jordan* runs, from its coming out of the Sea of *Galilee*, to its falling into the *Asphaltite Lake*; or *Salt-Sea*. But we are not to imagine, that this Plain was once a continu'd Level, without any Risings or Descents: The greatest Part of it indeed was Champion-Country, (and for this Reason was commonly called *Μεγαπιδιον*, or the great Field) but therein we read (b) of the *Valley of Jericho*, and (c) of the *Vale of Siddim*; in the latter of which these Cities stood, in a Situation so very advantageous, that we find it compared (d) to the Land of *Egypt*, nay even to the Garden of *Paradise*, upon account of its being so well water'd. And well it might, seeing it had (as the *Lacus Asphaltites* has to this Day) not only the Streams of the River *Jordan* running quite thro' it, but (e) the River *Arnon* from the East, (f) the Brook *Zered*, and the (g) famous Fountain *Callirrhoe*, from the South, falling into it. Now, since all this Water had no direct Passage into the Sea, it must necessarily follow, either that it was convey'd away by some *subterraneous* Passage, or was swallow'd up in the Sands, that every where encompassed it; which might the more easily be done, because the Inhabitants of those hot Countries us'd to divide their Rivers into several small Branches, for the Benefit of watering their Fields.

Their Situation.

AND as this Plenty of Water gave great Riches to the Soil, and Fertility to the Country, so Wealth and Abundance of all Things (as Mankind are too apt to abuse God's Gifts) made *Sodom*, and the neighbouring Cities very infamous for their Wickedness and Impiety. The Prophet *Ezekiel* gives us a Description of them: (h) Behold this was the Iniquity of thy Sister *Sodom*; Pride, Fullness of Bread, and Abundance of Idleness was in her, and in her Daughters,

The Wickedness of their Inhabitants.

(a) *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. I. (b) *Deut.* xxxiv. 3. (c) *Gen.* xiv. 3. (d) *Chap.* xiii. 10. Vide Page 7. Vol. II. in the Notes. (e) *Josephus's Antiq.* l. 4. c. 4. (f) *Numb.* xxi. 12. (g) *Pliny*, l. 5. c. 16. (h) *Chap.* xvi. 49, 50.

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

ters, neither did she strengthen the Hand of the Poor and Needy, but was haughty, and committed Abomination before me; which (i) *Josephus* might have in his Eye, when he gave us this Account of them. “The Sodomites, says he, waxed proud, and, by Reason of their Riches and Wealth, grew contumelious towards Men, and impious towards God; so that they were wholly unmindful of the Favours, they receiv’d from him. They were inhospitable to Strangers, and too proud and arrogant to be rebuk’d. They burnt in unnatural Lusts towards one another, and took Pleasure in none, but such as ran to the same Excesses of Riot with themselves.”

The Manner, wherein they were destroy’d.

THESE, and other abominable Enormities, provok’d the divine Ruler of the World to destroy their Cities, whose Cry was now grown great for Vengeance; and the Manner, wherein it was effected, *Moses* has recorded in these Words: (k) *Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah Brimstone and Fire from the Lord out of Heaven, and he overthrew the Cities, and all the Plain, and all the Inhabitants of the Cities, and that which grew upon the Ground*; and for the better understanding of this, we must observe, 1st, (l) That, in the *Vale of Siddim*, (the Tract of Ground, which was now destroy’d) there were a great many Pits of *Bitumen*, which, being a very combustible Matter, (m) is, in some Places, *liquid*, in others, *solid*; and not only found near the Surface of the Earth, but lies sometimes very deep, and is dug from the very Bowels of it. 2dly, We must observe, that the *Brimstone and Fire*, which the Lord is said to rain upon Sodom and Gomorrah, means *Brimstone inflam’d*; that, in the Hebrew Stile, *Brimstone inflam’d* signifies *Lightning*; and that the Reason, why *Lightning* is thus describ’d, no one can be ignorant of, that has either smelt the Places, which have been struck with Thunder, or * read what learned Men have wrote upon

(i) *Antiq. l. 1. c. 12.* (k) *Gen. xix. 24, 25.* (l) *Le Clerc’s Commentary.* (m) *Pliny’s Natural History, l. 25. c. 15.*

* Thus Thunder and Lightning, says *Pliny* (*Lib. 35. c. 15.*) have the Smell of *Brimstone*, and the very Light and Flame of them is sulphureous: And *Seneca* (*Quæst. Nat. l. 2. c. 21.*) tells us, that all Things, which are struck by Lightning, have a sulphureous Smell; as indeed our natural Philosophers have plainly demonstrated, that, what we call the Thunder-bolt, is nothing else

on the Subject: 3dly, We must observe further, that God is not only said to have *rained down Brimstone and Fire*, but Brimstone and Fire FROM THE LORD; where the Addition of *from the Lord*, which, at first Sight, may appear to be superfluous, or to denote a Plurality of Persons in the Deity (as most *Christian* Interpreters would have it) does more particularly describe the *Thunder-bolt*, * which, by the *Hebrews*, as well as other Nations, is frequently call'd the *Fire of God*, the *Fire from God*, &c. and the Reason is,—Because, Men having no Power over this Kind of *Meteor*, and it being impossible for them, by any Kind of Contrivance, to ascend up to the Clouds, God is therefore suppos'd to dwell there, and to cast down his Bolts from thence.

Now, from these Observations put together, we may, in some measure, form a Notion to ourselves, how this Destruction came to be effected. For, tho' *Moses* does not inform us, after what Manner the Lightning and Thunderbolts from above subverted these Cities, and their adjacent Territories; yet, since he plainly makes mention of them, we cannot comprehend how it could happen any otherwise, than that the Lightning and Thunderbolts, falling, in great Abundance, upon some Pits of *Bitumen*, * the Veins of

G 2

that

else but a *sulphureous Exhalation*. *Persius*, in his second *Satire*, calls it *Sulphur sacrum*.

Ignovisse putas, quia cum tonat, ocyus Ilex

Sulphure discutitur sacro, quam tuque, Domusque.

And for this Reason the *Greeks*, in their Language, call Brimstone θεῖον, i. e. *divine*, because the Thunder-bolt, which it assimilates, is suppos'd to come from God. *Le Clerc's Dissertation*.

* Thus, in the second Book of *Kings*, THE FIRE OF GOD came down from Heaven, and devoured them, Ch. i. 12. And *Isaiah* uses the same Expression, Ch. lxvi. 16. He shall be punished with THE FIRE OF THE LORD; to which the Passage in the *Latin Poet* exactly agrees:

Illicet igne Jovis, lapsisque citator astris,

Tristibus exiit Ripis. ————— Stat. Theb. l. 1.

Some however have remark'd it, as a peculiar Elegancy in the *Hebrew Tongue*, that it very often makes use of the *Antecedent* instead of the *Relative*, or the *Noun* instead of the *Pronoun*, especially when it means to express a Thing with great Vehemence, or to denote any Action to be supernatural or miraculous. *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar.* Vol. II. Exercit. 8.

* In *Lycia*, the *Hephæstian Mountains*, says *Pliny*, (l. 2. c. 106.) if you do but touch them with a lighted Torch, immediately

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

that combustible Matter took Fire immediately, and as the Fire penetrated into the lowermost Bowels of the bituminous Soil, these wicked Cities were subverted by a dreadful Earthquake, which was follow'd with a subsiding of the Ground; and that, * as soon as the Earth was sunk, it would unavoidably fall out, that the Waters, running to this Place in so great an Abundance, and mixing with the *Bitumen*, which they found in great Plenty, would make a Lake of what was a Valley before, and a Lake of the same Quality, with what † the Scripture calls the *Salt-Sea*.

A Description
of the
Lacus As-
phaltites.

THIS Lake, according to the Account we have of it, is enclosed, to the *East* and *West*, with exceeding high Mountains; on the *North* it is bounded by the Plain of *Jericho*, on which Side it receives the Waters of *Jordan*; on the *South* it is open, and extends beyond the Reach of the Eye, being twenty-four Leagues long, and six or seven broad.

Its

ately take Fire; nay the very Stones in the Rivers, and Sands in the Waters, burn. If you take a Stick out of these Waters, and draw Furrows upon the Ground with it (according to the common Report) a Tract of Fire follows it. *Le Clerc's* Dissertation.

* *Strabo* in his first, and *Pliny* in his second Book, will furnish us with several Examples of this Kind. *Strabo*, out of *Posidonius*, tells us (p. 40) that in *Phœnicia*, a certain City, situate above *Sidon*, was absorb'd by an Earthquake; and out of *Demetrius Scephius*, that several Earthquakes have happen'd in *Asia Minor*, by which whole Towns have been devour'd, the Mountain *Siphylis* overthrown, and the Marshes turned into standing Lakes: And *Pliny* (l. 2. c. 88.) testifies, that by a Fire, which suddenly broke out of it, the Mountain *Epopos* was levelled to the Ground, and a Town buried in the Deep; for the Arch, that supported the Ground, breaking in, the Matter underneath being wholly consum'd, the Soil above must, of Necessity, sink and be swallow'd up in these Caverns, if they were of any large Extent. *Le Clerc's* Dissertations.

† It is called the *Salt-Sea*, not only because its Waters are salt to a great Degree, but to distinguish it likewise from two other Lakes, the Lake of *Samachon*, and the Lake of *Gennesareth* (through which the River *Jordan* runs) which are fresh Water. It obtain'd in Time the Name of the *Dead-Sea*, not only because its Waters are immoveable, and more like a Sea of liquid Pitch, than of Water; but because no living Creature can abide in it; nor any Plant, or Tree grow near it, by reason of those bituminous Effluvioms, which it sends forth; and, from the Abundance of this Matter, it most frequently occurs in heathen Writers under the Title of *Lacus Asphaltites*. *Heylin's* Cosmography.

Its Water is extremely deep and heavy; so heavy, that a Man cannot, without Difficulty, sink in it; but of so nauseous a Taste, and noisome Smell, that neither Fish, nor Fowl accusom'd to the Water, can live in it. It is full of *Bitumen*, which, at uncertain Seasons, boils up from the Bottom in Bubbles, at which Time the Superficies of the Lake swells, and resembles the Rising of an Hill. Adjoining to the Lake are Fields, which formerly (as we shewed from *Tacitus*) were fruitful, but are now so parch'd, and burnt up, that they have lost their Fertility, insomuch that every Thing, whether it grows spontaneously, or be planted by Man, whether it be Herb, Fruit, or Flower, * as soon as it is compress'd, moulders away immediately into Dust; and to this (n) the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* seems to allude, when he tells us, that, *of the Wickedness of those Cities, the waste Land, that smoketh to this Day, is a Testimony, and the Plants bearing Fruit, that never come to Ripeness.*

“ THE Cinders, Brimstone, and Smoke, (o) says Philo, “ and a certain obscure Flame, as it were of a Fire burning, “ still perceivable in some Parts of the Country, are Memorials of the perpetual Evil, which happen'd to it;” and, “ as (p) *Josephus* adds, the Things that are said of “ *Sodom* are confirm'd by ocular Inspection, there being “ some Relicts of the Fire, which came down from Heaven, and some Resemblance of the five Cities, still to be “ seen:” And 'tis the Duration of these Monuments of divine Wrath perhaps, which gave Occasion to St *Jude* to say, that the wicked Inhabitants of these Cities were set forth for an Example, suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire, i. e. of a Fire, whose Marks were to be perpetuated unto the End of the World: † For it is a common Thing in Scrip-

G 3

“ ture,

* Whether there be any Truth in this Part of the Account of *Tacitus*, 'tis hard to tell. As for the Apples of *Sodom* (to which he seems to allude) Mr *Maundrell* tells us, that he never saw, nor heard of any thereabouts, nor was there any Tree to be seen near the Lake, from which one might expect such Kind of Fruit; and therefore he supposes the *Being*, as well as the *Beauty*, of that Fruit a meer Fiction, and only kept up, because it serv'd for a good *Allusion*, and now and then helped Poets to a pat Similitude. Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jerusalem*.

(u) Chap. x. 7. (o) In *Vitâ Moses*, l. 2. (p) De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 27.

† Thus God threatens to make the People of *Israel* ἐρημίαν αἰώνιον, a perpetual Desolation, Ezek. xxxv. 9. σύριγμα αἰώνιον, a perpetual

A. M.
2108, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx—xxv.
11.

A. M. 2108, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1896, &c.
From Gen.
xx. - xxv. 11.

How far it
was miracu-
lous.

ture, to express a great and irreparable Vastation, whose Effects and Signs shall be permanent to the latest Ages, by the Word *αἰώνιος*, which we here render *eternal*.

THUS, in all Probability, were the Cities of the Plain of *Jordan* overthrown: Nor is there any Doubt to be made, but that the miraculous Hand of God was employed in sending down this heavy Judgment. For, (q) tho' in a Soil, impregnated with Bitumen, the Cities, which are built thereon, may be shaken with an *Earthquake*, and swallow'd up by a sudden *Hiatus*; tho' Thunderbolts may fall, and set the Veins of Sulphur and Bitumen on Fire, which, afterwards breaking out, and mingling with the Water, may, in a low Valley, easily cause a Lake full of *Asphaltus*: Tho' these Things, I say, in Process of Time, might have come to pass in an ordinary course of Nature; yet, if they were done, before their *natural Causes* were in a Disposition to produce them; if they would not have been done *that Instant*, unless it had been for some extraordinary Interposition of God, or his blessed Angels; it ought to be reputed no less a *Miracle*, than if every Particular in the Transaction had plainly surpassed the usual Operations of Nature. And, that the Judgment now before us happened in this Manner, (r) the two Angels, dispatch'd by Almighty God upon this important Occasion, (s) God's foretelling *Abraham* his Design, the Angels acquainting *Lot* with the Errand, about which they came, and their urging and instigating to him to be gone, (t) to make haste, and *escape to Zoar*, *because they could do nothing, until he was come thither*, are Arguments sufficiently

a perpetual Hissing, Jer. xviii. 16. and *ὀνειδισμὸν αἰώνιον*, an everlasting Reproach, Jer. xxiii. 40. and this more especially is threatened, where the Destruction of a City or Nation is compar'd to the Overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*; *ὃ καλοικηθήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρὸνόν*, it shall never be inhabited, Isa. xiii. 20. Whether *Sodom* really underwent this Fate, or some Time after was rebuilt, is a Question, that has exercised the Learned. 'Tis certain, that in the *Notitia* express Mention is made of *Sodom*, as an *episcopal City*; and, among the Bishops of *Arabia*, there is found one *Severus*, a Bishop of *Sodom*, who subscribed to the first Council of *Nice*: Mr *Reland* however cannot persuade himself, that this impious Place was ever rebuilt; and therefore he believes that the Word *Sodom*, which is read among the *Subscriptions* of that Council, must be a Fault of the Copiers. *Calmet's Dictionary*, on the Word *Sodom*.

(q) *Le Clerc's Commentary* in Locum. (r) Gen. xviii. 22.
(s) Ver. 17. (t) Gen. xix. 22.

sufficiently convincing, that the 'Thunder and Lightning, or (as (u) others will have it) the Showers of liquid Fire, or rather (x) Storms of Nitre and Sulphur mingled with Fire, which fell upon these wicked Places, were immediately sent down by the Appointment of God, and by the Ministry of his Angels, who, knowing all the *Meteors* of the Air, and their repugnant Qualities, did collect, commix, and employ them, as they thought fit, in the Execution of God's just Judgment upon a People devoted to Destruction.

THUS we have consider'd the Manner of the Destruction of the Cities of the Plain, how far natural Causes might be concern'd, and wherein the miraculous Hand of God did intervene. Whether a *Deluge* or a *Conflagration* be the more formidable Judgment of the two, we cannot tell; our Imaginations will hardly reach the Dreadfulness of either; and to enter into the Comparison, is a Task too shocking. As the History however of those, who suffer'd these Punishments, is recorded in Scripture *for our Admonition*, (y) *that we should not lust after evil Things even as they lusted*; so the Apostle has set both their Examples before us, and laid it down for a sure Proposition,—That, (z) *if God spared not the old World, but brought in a Flood upon the Ungodly, and if he, turning the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into Ashes, condemn'd them with an Overthrow, or (according to (a) St Jude) condemn'd them to the Vengeance of eternal Fire*; we need not doubt, but that, as he is in all Ages the same, a God of Justice, as well as Mercy, no Iniquity can ultimately escape. For, though, upon every Occasion, he does not lay bare his vindictive Arm; tho' (b) *he is strong and patient, so that he seldom whetteth his Sword, and prepareth the Instruments of Death*; yet a few of these remarkable, these monumental Instances of his Severity against Sin, are enough to convince us, that *he hath reserved the Unjust (however they may escape now) unto the Day of Judgment to be punish'd.*

(u) *Howell's History.* (x) *Patrick's Commentary.* (y) 1 Cor. x. 6. (z) 2 Pet. ii. 5. (a) Ver. 7. (b) Psal. vii. 12, &c.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

C H A P II.

Of the Life of Isaac, from his Marriage to his Death.

The HISTORY.

The Birth of
Esau and
Jacob.

IS A A C was forty Years old, * when he married *Rebekah*, the Daughter of *Bethuel*; but his Mother *Sarah*'s Misfortune attended his Wife, viz. that she was without Issue for almost twenty Years together, till God at last was pleased to hear † his earnest Prayers, and grant him the Blessing, he so much long'd for. *Rebekah* however had not many Months conceived before the Struggles of the two Children (for she had *Twins*) in her Womb gave her such Pain and Uneasiness, that she began, in a Manner, to wish herself

* How old *Rebekah* was, when she was married to *Isaac*, the Scripture does no where inform us; but the Conjectures of most of the *Jewish* Commentators make her to be extremely young. The oldest, that they will allow her to be, is not above 14, which was a Thing hardly customary in those Days: And yet, considering her absolute Management of all Affairs, even when *Isaac* was alive, we cannot but suppose, that, altho' she liv'd not so long, she was a considerable deal younger than he. *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar.* Vol. II. Exercit. 11.

† The Word in the Original signifies to *pray with Constancy, Vehemence, and Importunity*: And the *Jews* hereupon have a traditional Explication, which is preserv'd in *Jonathan's Targum*, viz. that he carried his Wife to the Place of the Altar, upon Mount *Moriah*, where he himself was once bound to be sacrific'd, and there made a most solemn Invocation, by the Faith of his Father *Abraham*, and by the Oath of God, that she, tho' barren by Nature, might conceive by Virtue of the *Covenant*, and supernatural Blessing; and accordingly he prevail'd with God to grant him his Request. What we render *for his Wife*, may likewise signify *in the Presence of his Wife*; and so the Import of the Words will be, that, besides their more private Devotions, they did oftentimes, in a more solemn Manner, and with united Force, pray for the Mercy, wherein they were equally concern'd; nor cou'd there be any Presumption in their thus petitioning, what, at present, was denied them, because they knew very well, that God's Purpose and Promise did not exclude, but rather require, the Use of all convenient Means, for their Accomplishment. *Peol's Annotations*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum*.

herself not with Child again, and, when she went † to consult the Divine Oracle, what the meaning of this uncommon Conflict might be, she had it return'd for Answer, that the two Children, which she then bore, were to be the Heads of two different Nations, should long contest it for Superiority, but that, at length, the *Younger* should get the Dominion over the *Elder*.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

WHEN the appointed Time for their Birth was come, the Child, which *Rebekah* was first deliver'd of, was all cover'd over with red Hair, for which Reason his Parents † call'd him *Esau*; and the other came after him so very close, that he took hold of his Heel with his Hand, and was therefore called *Jacob*, to denote (what he afterwards prov'd) the *Supplanter*

† The most early, and common Method of *Enquiring of the Lord*, was, by going to some one of his Prophets, and consulting him; but then the Question is, who the Prophet was, whom *Rebekah*, upon this Occasion, consulted? Some of the *Jewish* Doctors are of Opinion, that she went to the *School*, or *Oratory* of *Shem*, (whom they suppose then alive) or to some other Person, constituted by him, and call'd of God to that Ministration. Some *Christian* Commentators imagine, it was *Melchisedeck*, the *Priest of the most high God*, whom she consulted; but if it were any Priest, or Prophet, that then she applied to, her Father-in-law *Abraham*, who was certainly then alive, and is expressly call'd a Prophet, *Gen. xx. 7.* seems to have been the most proper Person, not only because he was highly interested in her Concerns, but had likewise the *Shechinah*, or divine Appearance (as most imagine) continually resident with him. But, as there was another Manner, besides that of answering by Prophets, customary in those Days, *viz.* by *Dreams*, and *Visions*, their Opinion seems to be most probable, who suppose, that *Rebekah* retir'd into some secret Place, and there, having poured out her Soul before God in ardent Prayers, received an Answer, not long after, either in a Dream, or Vision, by a Voice from Heaven, or by the Information of an Angel, sent for that Purpose. Vid. *Le'Clerc's* Commentary, *Bibliotheca Bibl.* in Locum, and *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriarch. Vol. II. Exercit. 11.

† The Meaning of the Word *Esau* is somewhat obscure, unless we derive it from *Hassab*, to *make*, or *be perfect*; because he was of a stronger Constitution, than ordinary Infants, as having Hair all over him, which is an Indication of Manhood, whereas other Children are born with Hair only on their Heads: And, as for *Jacob*, it is deriv'd from an *Hebrew* Word, which signifieth to *supplant*, and, by the Addition of the Letter *Jod*, one of the Formatives of Nouns, it denotes a *Supplanter*, or one, that *taketh hold of*, and *trippeth up* his Brother's Heels. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Universal History*, c. 7.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

planter of his Brother; and as they advanced in Years, their Tempers and Occupations were quite different. *Esau* was a strong and active Person, who delighted much in Hunting, and thereby supplying his Father with Venison very frequently, won his particular Affection; while *Jacob*, who was of a more gentle and courteous Disposition, by staying at home in the Tent, and employing himself in Family-offices, became his Mother's Darling.

Jacob's Pur-
chase of his
Brother's
Birth-
Right.

ONE Day, when *Jacob* had made him some Lentil-pottage, *Esau*, returning from his Sport, quite spent with Hunger and Fatigue, was so taken with the Looks of it, that he earnestly desir'd his Brother † to let him eat with him: But his Brother, it seems, being well instructed by his Mother, refus'd to do it, unless he would make him an immediate Dedition of his *Birthright*. *Esau*, considering to what a Multitude of Dangers his Manner of Life, in encountering wild Beasts, did daily expose him, made no great Esteem of what *Jacob* requir'd; and *Jacob*, perceiving his Disposition to comply, (that he might have the *Right* more firmly convey'd to him) † propos'd his doing it by Way of *Oath*, which the other never scrupled, and, after the Bargain was made, fell to eating very greedily, never once reflecting on what a vile and scandalous Thing it needs must be, to sell his Birth-right, and † all the great Privileges thereunto belonging, for a *Mess of Pottage*.

IN

† *Lentils* were a Kind of Pulse, somewhat like our Vetches, or coarser Sort of Pease. St *Austin*, upon *Psalms* lxvi. says, that these were *Egyptian Lentils*, which were in great Esteem, and very probably gave the Pottage a red Tincture.

† Some imagine, that *Esau* did not know what this Lentil-soop was, and therefore he only call'd it by its Colour, *give me of that red, that same red*; as it is in the *Hebrew*, for which Reason he was likewise call'd *Edom*, which signifies *red*: But there is no Occasion to suppose, that he was ignorant of what Lentils were, only his repeating the Word *red*, without adding the Name of a Thing, denoted his great Hunger, and *Eagerness* of Appetite, which was probably still more irritated by the Colour of the Soop. *Biblioth. Bib.*

† The Birth-right, or Right of Primogeniture, had many Privileges annex'd to it. The First-born was consecrated to the Lord, *Exod.* xxii. 29. had a double Portion of the Estate allotted him, *Deut.* xxi. 17. had a Dignity and Authority over his Brethren, *Gen.* xlix. 3. succeeded in the Government of the Family, or Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 3. and (as some, with good

IN Abraham's Time the Famine was so severe in *Canaan*, that he was forced to remove into *Egypt*; and, upon the same Account, his Son *Isaac* had now left his Habitation, near the Well *Lahairoi*, and was come as far as *Gerar*, † where *Abimelech*, at this Time, was King, in order to proceed in his Journey; but, while he was deliberating what to do, God admonish'd him in a Dream, not to go down into *Egypt*, but to tarry in the Country, where he then was; and, at the same Time, assur'd him, that he would not only secure him from the Danger of the Famine, but, in Performance of the Oath, which he had sworn to his Father *Abraham*, his faithful and obedient Servant, would cause his Family (to which he would give the whole Land of *Canaan* in Possession, and from which the *Messias*, the Desire of all Nations, shou'd descend) to multiply exceedingly.

ISAAC, according to the Divine Direction, went no farther than *Gerar*; and here it was, that he fell into the same Weakness, that his Father had formerly done in the same Place, viz. his making his Wife pass for his Sister, for fear that some wicked Man or other might be tempted to destroy him, in order to enjoy her. But so it was, that the King, from his Window, observing some Familiarities pass between them, that did not so well comport with the Character of a Brother, sent for him immediately, and complain'd of his Diffimulation; charg'd him with being married, and (not unmindful, very probably, of what had befallen the Nation upon the Account of *Sarah*) with a Design of entailing Guilt, and therewith a Judgment of God upon his Subjects, in case any Attempt had been made upon her Virtue. Fear of Death, and the Desire of Self-preservation, were

good Reason, imagine) succeeded to the Priesthood, or chief Government in Matters Ecclesiastical. He had a Right to challenge the particular Blessing of his dying Parent: He had the Covenant, which God made with *Abraham*, that from his Loins *Christ* should come, consign'd to him: And (what is more) these Prerogatives were not confin'd to his Person only, but descended to his latest Posterity, in Case they comported themselves so, as to deserve them. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† It is not unlikely, that this *Abimelech* might be the Son of that *Abimelech*, King of *Gerar*, with whom *Abraham* had formerly made a Covenant, supposing *Abimelech* to be here the proper Name of a Man: But it is much more probable, that, at this Time, it was a common Name for the Kings of the *Philistines*, as *Cæsar* was for the *Roman* Emperors, and *Pharaoh* for the Kings of *Egypt*.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20 to
Ch. xxviii.
8.

His leaving
Gerar.

were the only Apology, that *Iſaac* made for his Conduct; which *Abimelech* was pleas'd to accept, and, accordingly, iſſued out an Ediſt, that none, upon Pain of Death, ſhou'd dare to offer any Injury, either to *Iſaac*, or his Wife.

THE great Acceſſion of Wealth however, wherewith God had bleſſed him, during his Stay in *Gerar*, raiſed the Envy and Indignation of the *Philiftines*. That very Year, wherein he thought of going down into *Egypt* for fear of the Famine, he ſowed a Piece of Ground, and, to the great Surprize of his Neighbours, received † an hundred-fold Produce from it; ſo that *Abimelech's* Subjects began all to malign him, and (to oblige him to depart the Country) fill'd up the Wells, which his Father's Servants had digged. Nay, the very King himſelf, to ſatisfy the Reſentment of his People, deſired of him to leave the City of *Gerar*, and to find him out another Habitation; for that, in his Opinion, ‡ he had improv'd

† This hundred-fold Increate in one Year was given by God unto *Iſaac* for a Sign of his Purpoſe to fulfil the Covenant made with his Father, and lately renew'd to him; particularly for the Confirmation of the Truth and Reaſon of the Warning againſt his going down into *Egypt*, as he was inclined, according to the natural Proſpect of Things. Such an Increate was, at this Time, a ſingular Bleſſing of God, after there had been a conſiderable Dearth, and the Soil perhaps, that afforded ſo large a Crop, not ſo rich; otherwiſe, we may learn from *Varro* [*de Re Ruſtica*, l. i. c. 44.] that in *Syria*, near *Gadera*, and in *Africa*, about *Bizantium*, they reaped an hundred Buſhels from one; nay *Bochart* [in *Canaan*. l. i. c. 25.] ſhews, from ſeveral good Authors, that ſome Places in *Africa* are ſo very fruitful, that they produce two or three Hundred fold, which makes this Account of *Mofes* far from being incredible. *Bibliotheca Bib.* and *Patrick's* Commentary.

‡ The Words of *Abimelech*, according to our Tranſlation, are theſe, *Thou art much mightier than we*; but certainly he cou'd not mean that *Iſaac* was more powerful than the whole People of *Paleſtine*, or that he had a larger Family, or more numerous Attendance, than himſelf had, and conſequently was in a Condition, if he had been ſo minded, to diſturb the Government. This we can by no Means conceive to be poſſible; and therefore the Words in the Original [*ci gnatzamptha mimennu*] do not mean, *becauſe thou art mightier than we*, but *becauſe thou art increaſed, and multiplied from us, or by us*, i. e. thou haſt got a great deal by us; while thou haſt continu'd amongſt us, thou haſt made a great Acceſſion to thy Subſtance, and we do not care to let thee get any more; ſo that the *Philiftines* did not fear him, but envy him, they grudged that he ſhou'd get ſo much among them, and therefore deſired

improv'd his Fortune sufficiently, while he had been among them: So that, to secure himself, as well as make the King easy, he retir'd into the Valley of *Gerar*, where his Father had formerly fed his Cattle, and there began to open the Wells, which his Father had caused to be dug; but the *Philistines* had filled up, and called them by their antient Names. But the People of the Country, thinking him too well situated there, quarrell'd with his Shepherds, took away their Wells, and put him to many Inconveniencies; so that, being quite tir'd with their repeated Insults, he removed farther from them, and went, and liv'd in the most distant Parts of their Country.

HERE it was that he dug another Well: And, meeting with no Opposition, called it *Rehoboth*, i. e. *Room*, or *Enlargement*, because God had now delivered him from the Straits and Difficulties, he had lately been in, by Reason of a Scarceness of Water, and not long after settled his constant Abode at *Beer-sheba*; where he had no sooner arriv'd, but, that very Night, God appear'd to him in a Vision, promising him his Favour and Protection, and that he would bless him, and multiply his Seed, for his Servant *Abraham's* Sake: So that *Isaac*, intending to continue here, built him an Altar, and Place of religious Worship, and cleared out the Well, † which his Father had formerly dug.

NOR had he been long here, before *Abimelech*, conscious of the peculiar Manner, wherein God had blessed him, sensible of the ill Usage, he had received from his Subjects, and apprehensive perhaps, that, in Time, he might think of revenging the Injuries he had suffer'd, came, (attended with † the chief of his Nobility, and with the Captain-General of his Forces) either to renew the old League, which had formerly

A. M:
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris:
1356, &c.
From Gen.
xxv—20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

desired him to absent their Country. *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 8.

† The Reasons, that induced *Isaac* to open the old Wells, rather than dig new ones, might be, 1. Because he was sure to find a Spring there, which he cou'd not be certain of in other Places; 2. Because it was easier, and less liable to Censure and Envy; 3. Because he had a Right to them, as they were his Father's Purchase and Property; and, 4. Because he was minded to preserve, and do Honour to his Father's Memory, for which Reason he call'd them by the same Names, that his Father had done before him. *Bibliotheca Bib. in Locum.*

† The two that are mention'd here are *Phicol* and *Abazzah*. *Phicol* is of the same Name, and bore the same Office, which he had, who is mention'd Ch. xxi. 22. but we must not suppose, that he was the same Man, any more, than *Abimelech* was the same

same

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv--20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

formerly been made with his Father *Abraham*, or to enter into a new one.

'T WAS but proper that *Isaac*, upon this Occaſion, ſhou'd, in ſome meaſure, reſent the Indignities, that were offer'd him: And therefore, at firſt, he expoſtulates the Matter with them, and ſeems to wonder, why they came to viſit him, whom they had, ſo lately, expell'd their Country. *Abimelech* made the beſt Excuse for their Behaviour, that the Nature of the Thing wou'd bear; told him, that he had all along perceiv'd, that the Divine Favour attended him in all his Undertakings, and that therefore, that he might not be thought to oppoſe God, he was come to renew the Covenant depending between his People, and *Abraham's* Poſterity, and was ready to engage in the ſame Conditions, and Obligations.

THIS Speech, ſo full of Submiſſion and Acknowledgments, ſoon pacified *Isaac*, who was naturally of a quiet and eaſy Diſpoſition; ſo that, having entertained the King and his Attendants in a very reſpectful and generous Manner that Night, the next † Morning they confirmed the League, with the uſual Ceremonies; and *Abimelech* took Leave, and returned home: But, before he departed, *Isaac's* Servants brought him Word, that, in the Well, which they had been clearing out, and which *Abraham*, in former Times, had bought of the King of *Gerar*, they had happily found a Spring of Water; for which Reaſon, in the Hearing of *Abimelech*, and all the Company, he called it again by the Name of *Beer-sheba*, the Well of the Oath, “ i. e. the Well, wherein Water “ was diſcover'd, on the Day, that *Abimelech* and I enter'd “ into

ſame King. The Word properly ſignifies *Face* or *Head*, and as the Captain-General is Head of the Forces he commands, ſo ſome have imagin'd that it is the *appellative* Name, (like that of *Tribunus*, or *Dictator* among the *Romans*) for every one among them that were advanced to that Dignity: And in like Manner, though the *Septuagint* ſeem to make *Abazzah* a proper Name, and call him the Para-nymph, or *Bride-man*, to *Abimelech*, which was always accounted a Poſt of the firſt Honour; yet I ſhould rather chuſe, with *Onkelas*, to make the Word ſignify a *Train*, or great Number of Nobility, which came in Attendance on *Abimelech*, and to do the Patriarch the greater Honour upon this Occaſion. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and *Howel's* Hiſtory.

† The Articles were agreed upon over Night, and, by a mutual Oath, ratified in the Morning: And the Reaſon, why Men took publick Oaths in the Morning faſting, ſeems to have been *ob Reverentiam Juramenti*, as the *Jews* call it, becauſe they looked upon them as very ſolemn and ſacred Things. *Bibliotheca Bib.*

“ into a Treaty of Peace, and ratified the same with the
“ Solemnity of Oaths.”

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv---26. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

By this Time *Isaac*'s two Sons were arrived at the Age of forty; and *Esau*, who had contracted an Acquaintance with the People of the Land, had married two Wives, *Judith*, the Daughter of *Beeri*, and *Bethshemath*, the Daughter of *Elon*, both *Hittites*, which was no small Affliction to his Parents. This, in a Manner, quite alienated his Mother's Heart from him; but, as for his Father, his Affections continued the same. And therefore, finding himself grow old and feeble, and his Eyes quite dim with Age, and apprehending his Death to be nearer, than really it was, he call'd him one Day, and declared to him his Purpose of giving him his *paternal Benediction*, before he died; but wish'd him withal to take his hunting Instruments, and go into the Fields, and kill him a little Venison, and dress it to his Palate, that, when he had eaten thereof, and refreshed Nature, he might bless him with a more tender Affection, as well as a more becoming *Pathos*.

REBEKAH overheard all this Discourse, and, as soon as *Esau* was well gone, she called *Jacob*, and acquainted him with what was transacting; that his Father was going to bestow a Benediction, which was final and irrevocable, upon his Brother; but that, if he wou'd listen to her, and do what she order'd him, she had an Expedient, by substituting him in his Room, to turn aside the Blessing, where she desir'd it. *Jacob* was willing enough to comply with his Mother's Request; but, if he was to *personate* his Brother, the difference of his Skin and Voice made him apprehensive, that his Father might discover the Imposture, and thereupon be provok'd, instead of his Prayers and best Wishes, to load him with Imprecations: But so confident was his Mother of Success in this Matter, that she took all the *Curses upon herself*, and encourag'd him to follow her Directions. Hereupon *Jacob* hasten'd to the Fold, and brought two fat Kids from thence, which his Mother immediately took, and dress'd the choice Pieces of them with savoury Sauce, like Venison; and so, having cover'd his Neck and his Hands with the Skins of the Kids, and † array'd him with *Esau*'s best Robes, she sent him in trembling with the Dish to his Father.

HIS

† The *Jews* have a Fancy, that it was the Robe of *Adam*, which had been transmitted down, from Father to Son, in the *Line of Blessing* (as they call it) till it came to *Abraham*, who left it

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv—20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

His Father was lying upon the Bed, when *Jacob* enter'd the Room, and, upon his demanding *who he was*, he roundly answer'd, that he was his elder Son *Esau*, who had brought him some Venison to eat. Surpris'd at the great Expedition, he had made, and not knowing indeed what to think, the old Man put several Times the Question to him, whether he was, in reality, his Son *Esau* or no; to which he as often answer'd in the Affirmative, and desir'd him, in short, to arise, and taste of what he had prepar'd for him, since God, who knew his Zeal to obey his Father, had brought it into his Hands much sooner, than he could otherwise have expected.

THE Difference between *Jacob's* and *Esau's* Voice was so remarkable, that *Isaac* cou'd not but suspect some Delusion in the Case; and therefore he desir'd him to draw nearer, that he might be the better satisfied; and when he had felt the hairy Skin on his Hands and Neck, he own'd that *the Hands were the Hands of Esau, tho' the Voice was the Voice of Jacob*.

THUS satisfied, or rather thus deluded, he arose, and eat heartily of his Son's pretended Venison; and, as soon as he had din'd, and drank * a Cup or two of Wine, he bid him draw

it to *Isaac*, and he, designing *Esau*, as his eldest, for his Successor, gave it to him. Some of them imagine, that this was a sacerdotal Habit, wherein *Esau*, in his Father's Illness, was suppos'd to officiate, and for this Reason it might be kept in *Isaac's* Tent, near to which, very likely, was the Place of religious Worship. In all Probability it was a Vestment of some Distinction, which the Heir of the Family, upon some solemn Occasions, was used to put on, and *Jacob*, at this Time, being to personate his Brother, there was a Necessity for him to have it: But how his Mother should come by it, or why she should have the keeping of it, when *Esau* had Wives of his own, is a Question that *Musculus* raises, and then answers it by saying,—That, because *Esau* had married these Wives without the Consent of his Parents, especially his Mother, she, for this Reason, refus'd to give it him, and perhaps reserv'd it for this very Occasion. But, in my Opinion, there seems to be no Necessity for this Supposition, since it was sufficient for her Purpose, that she knew where it was in *Esau's* Apartment. *Bibliotheca Bib. in Locum.*

* There is a Tradition among the *Jews*, that *Jacob* having omitted to bring Wine for his Father, an Angel prepar'd it, and brought it into his Apartment; that he gave it into *Jacob's* Hands, and *Jacob* pour'd it out for his Father; that the Wine

was

draw near, that he might now bestow upon him his promis'd Blessing. The Smell of *Jacob's* Garments contributed not a little to *Isaac's* Chearfulness. He smelt and prais'd them : In a Kind of Extasy of Pleasure, he embrac'd and kiss'd his pretended *First-born*; and, after having * wish'd him all heavenly and earthly Blessings, he at length dismiss'd him.

A. M. 2148, &c.
Ant. Ch. rif. 1856, &c.
From Gen. xxv. 20. to Ch. xxviii. 8.

JACOB was scarce got out of the Tent, when *Esau*, having returned from Hunting, and just made ready his Venison, came, and invited his Father in the same dutiful Manner, that his Brother had done. Surpris'd at this Address, his Father ask'd, *who he was*; and, when he understood that it was his elder Son *Esau*, he was quite in a Maze, and began to enquire, who, and where, that Person was, who had been there before, and taken away the Blessing, which he neither cou'd nor wou'd revoke. *Esau*, too well perceiving that it must have been *Jacob*, who had thus supplanted him, complains of his double Perfidy; first, in extorting his Birthright from him, and now in robbing him of his Father's Blessing; and then seems to wonder very much, that his Father's Store should be so far exhausted, as (since he would not revoke the other) not to have reserved one Blessing for him.

ISAAC was willing enough to gratify his Son's request, and it griev'd him, no doubt, to hear his bitter Lamentations; but what could he do? all the choicest of his Blessings he had bestow'd upon *Jacob*, and as they were gone, he could not recal them. However, that he might, in some measure,

was the same with the *Wine of Paradise*, which had been laid up from the Beginning; and that his Father, having drank of it, kissed him, and blessed him, as one filled with the Spirit, even with the Spirit of Prophecy and Blessing: But the Custom of the *Jewish* Doctors is to magnify every little Matter.

* The Prayer, which *Josephus* makes *Isaac* offer up to God upon this Occasion, is in Words to this Effect. " Eternal God, the Creator of all Things, that are made; thou, that hast been so gracious and bountiful to my Father, to myself, and to our Offspring, promising, and possessing us of all Things, and giving us Assurances of greater Blessings to come: Lord, make thy Words good to us by Effects, and do not despise thy Servant for his present Infirmities, which make him the more sensible of his Need of thy Support: Preserve this Child from all Evil in thy Mercy and infinite Goodness: Give him a long and happy Life: Bless him with all worldly Enjoyments, that may be for his Good; and make him a Terror to his Enemies, and an Honour and Comfort to his Friends. Antiq. l. i. c. 18.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chri.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv—20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

measure, pacify *Eſau*, by the ſame prophetick Spirit he acquaints him, “ That, tho’ § his Poſterity ſhould not enjoy
“ a very plentiful Country, yet they ſhould become a great
“ People, and mighty Warriors, who ſhould live by the
“ Dint of their Sword; and tho’ they ſhould ſometimes be-
“ come ſubject to the Descendants of *Jacob*, yet, in Proceſs
“ of Time, they would † ſhake off their Yoke, and erect
“ a Dominion of their own.”

E S A U

§ The Words in our Tranſlation carry a Senſe quite different to what we have here ſuggeſted; *Behold thy Dwelling ſhall be of the Fatneſs of the Earth, and of the Dew of Heaven.* But, beſides that this makes the Bleſſing the ſame with that, which was given to *Jacob*, Ver. 28. which *Iſaac* profeſſes himſelf incapable of doing; ’tis manifeſt, that *Idumæa*, where the Descendants of *Eſau* dwelt, was far from being a fat and fruitful Country. Had it been ſo, there had not been that Reaſon for the ſubſequent Words, *by thy Sword thou ſhalt live*; for a rich and plentiful Country would have ſecured them from living by Spoil and Plunder, as it is manifeſt the People of that Country did, if we can credit the Character which *Joſephus*, both in his *History of the Antiquities*, l. 13. and of the Wars of the *Jews*, l. 4. gives us of them. *Le Clerc’s Commentary*, and *Universal History*.

† The *Edomites*, or *Idumæans*, who were the Poſterity of *Eſau*, for a conſiderable Time, were a People of much more Power and Authority, than the *Iſraelites*, till, in the Days of *David*, they were entirely conquered, 2 *Sam.* viii. 14. they were thereupon govern’d by Deputies or Viceroyſ, appointed by the Kings of *Judah*; and, whenever they attempted to rebel, were, for a long Time, cruſhed, and kept under by the *Jews*. In the Days of *Jehoram*, the Son of *Jehoſhaphat*, they expell’d their Viceroy, and ſet up a King of their own, 2 *Kings* viii. 20. and though they were reduc’d at that Time, yet for ſome Generations after this, they ſeem’d to have liv’d independant on the *Jews*, and when the *Babylonians* invaded *Judæa*, they not only took Part with them, but violently oppreſſed them, even when the Enemy was withdrawn, ſo that, remembring what they had ſuffered under *Joab*, in the Days of *David*, they enter’d into the like cruel Meaſures againſt the *Jews*, and threatened to lay *Jeruſalem* level with the Ground. Their Animofity againſt the Poſterity of *Jacob* ſeems indeed to be hereditary; nor did they ever ceaſe, for any conſiderable Time, from Broils and Contentions, until they were conquered by *Hyrcauus*, and reduced to the Neceſſity of embracing the *Jewiſh* Religion, or quitting their Country: Hereupon, conſenting to the former they were incorporated with the *Jews*, and became one Nation, ſo that, in the firſt Century after Chriſt, the Name of *Idumæan* was loſt, and quite diſus’d. *Le Clerc’s Commentary*, and *Universal History*, l. 1. c. 4.

ESAU was now become so sensible of what he had lost by the Frauds and Deceptions of his Brother, that he was resolv'd, at a proper Season, to be reveng'd of him. His Regard to his Father would not permit him to express his Repentment in any violent Act, as yet; but, as he supposed, that he could not live long, he was determined to kill his Brother, as soon as his Father was dead. Some Speeches of this Kind had accidentally dropped from him, which were brought to his Mother's Ears. Whereupon she acquainted her favourite Son with the bloody Design, his Brother had conceived against him; told him, that the wisest Way would be for him to withdraw some where, until his Fury was asswaged, and the properest Place for that Purpose would be his Uncle *Laban's*, in *Mesopotamia*; that thither he might retire a little while, and, as soon as his Brother's Passion was over, she would not fail to re-call him; that to part with him indeed was no small Affliction to her, but nothing comparable to the Misery, that would ensue, if, in one Day, she should be bereaved of them both; of him, by the Hands of his Brother; and of his Brother, by the Hand of Justice.

JACOB, who was of a mild, if not a timorous Temper, readily complied with his Mother's Proposal, but then his Father's Consent was to be had; and this *Rebekah* undertook to obtain by artful Insinuations to her Husband, that *Esau's Hittite* Wives were a perpetual Grief and Trouble to her; that the whole comfort of her Life would be lost, if *Jacob* should chance to marry in the like unhappy Manner; and therefore, to prevent this Disaster, she thought it not amiss (if she might but have his Approbation therein) that he should go to her Brother *Laban's* in *Mesopotamia*, and there see, if he could fancy any one of his Daughters for a Wife.

ISAAC was unacquainted with the main Drift of her Discourse; but, being himself a pious Man, and knowing that the Promise, made to *Abraham*, and renewed in him, was to be compleated in the Issue of *Jacob*, called him to him, and upon his Blessing, gave him a strict Charge not to marry with any *Canaanitish* Woman, but to go to *Padan-Aram*, to the House of his Uncle *Laban*, and there provide himself with a Wife: Which if he did, " God wou'd bless him, *he said*, " and raise him up a numerous Posterity, and give that " Posterity the Possession of that very Country, where now " they were no more than Sojourners, according to the

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

*His being
sent into
Mesopo-
tamia.*

*Jacob's De-
parture into
Mesopo-
tamia.*

A. M. 2148, &c. " Promise, which he had made to his Grandfather A-
Ant. Christ. 1856, &c. " *braham.*"

From Gen. xxv. 20. to Ch. xxviii. 8. WITH these Words he dismissed *Jacob* to go to his Uncle's in *Mesopotamia*: And of the Patriarch *Isaac* we read no more, only that he was alive at his Son's Return, and lived three and twenty Years longer still; that he had removed from *Beer-sheba*, where his Son left him, and dwelt now at *Mamre*, not far from *Hebron*; where, at the Age of 188 Years, he died, and was buried in the same Sepulchre with his Father *Abraham*, by his two Sons, *Esau* and *Jacob*.

The OBJECTION.

" OF all the *Promises*, that God made unto the Pa-
" triarchs, none is so frequently repeated, as that of
" a *plenteous Issue*; and yet, if we look into the History,
" we shall find, that no Men's Wives were so frequently
" barren as theirs. *Sarah* had surpassed the ordinary Term
" of Conception above thirty Years, *Rebekah* had been
" married almost twenty, and *Rachel* full as long, before
" any of them had a Child; and yet God, all along, pro-
" mises their Husbands an innumerable Offspring, which
" can hardly be accounted for, unless we can suppose,
" that Barrenness and Fruitfulness are compatible, and that
" to *close up the Wife's Womb* is the readiest Way to
" make the Man's Seed like the Stars in Heaven for
" *Multitude*.

" BUT, after all these large Promises, *Isaac*, we read,
" had but two Sons; and yet (what is more surprizing in
" the divine Conduct) the Younger of these was not only
" (a) preferred before the Elder, quite contrary to the esta-
" blished Right of *Primogeniture*; but (as (b) the Scripture
" expresses it) *God loved Jacob, and hated Esau*, (c) *even*
" *when the Children, being yet unborn, had neither done*
" *good nor evil*, which is a manifest Instance of God's
" *Partiality*, and no small Argument for the Doctrine of
" *Predestination*: And yet, if we enquire into the Cha-
" racter of this *Child of Promise* (as he is call'd) we shall
" find that his Behaviour did hardly deserve so particular
" a Favour.

" FOR,

(a) Gen. xxv. 23. (b) Mal. i. 2, 3. (c) Rom. ix. 11,
&c.

“ FOR, what Apology can we make for his taking the
 “ Advantage of his Brother's Hunger, and thence over-
 “ reaching him in the Matter of his *Birth-right*? There is
 “ something so inhuman in denying an hungry Person a
 “ little Victuals; something so selfish, in expecting an ex-
 “ orbitant Price from one's own Brother, for a Mess of
 “ Pottage; something so crafty and designing, in bringing
 “ an eager Appetite under the Obligation of an Oath,
 “ that *Jacob* seems to have acted the mere *Sharper* in this
 “ whole Affair; nor (*d*) can *Esau's* supine Negligence, in
 “ giving up the Privilege, be reputed near so culpable, as the
 “ other's covetous, unlawful Method of obtaining it.

A. M.
 2148, &c.
 Ant. Chrif.
 1856, &c.
 From Gen.
 xxv. 20. to
 Ch. xxviii. 8.

“ AND, if we cannot excuse him in this, what shall we
 “ say for his fraudulent Practice in intercepting his Father's
 “ Blessing; in averring himself to be the Person he was
 “ not; in telling a Multitude of positive Lyes; in listen-
 “ ing to the Instigation of a crafty Woman, his Mother;
 “ in imposing upon the Blindness and Infirmary of his aged
 “ Father; and in making even God himself a Party to
 “ the Fraud? For so he confidently tells his Father, (*e*)
 “ *the Lord thy God hath brought the Venison to me.* And,
 “ if we cannot acquit the Son, who acted only in Subor-
 “ dination, what shall we say for the Mother herself,
 “ who was the prime Author or Contriver of the whole
 “ Plot?

“ CONSTANT Conversation and a whole Similitude of
 “ Features, Temper, or Manners, may be allow'd to en-
 “ gage a Mother's Affections more towards one Child,
 “ than another; but certainly that Parent is justly to be
 “ censur'd, who trains up her Child in any, the least,
 “ Wickedness, for the Acquisition even of the greatest
 “ Good; and that Child is liable to the divine Maledic-
 “ tion, (*f*) *who deceiveth* his Neighbour, much more his
 “ Father, and (*g*) *maketh the Blind to go out of his*
 “ *Way.*

“ THE Truth is, *Rebekah*, in her whole Conduct, ap-
 “ pears to be a Woman of Craft and Intrigue; dextrous
 “ in contriving, and bold in executing any Means, to ac-
 “ complish her Design. She had a peculiar Art in im-
 “ posing upon her Husband, by concealing her real Senti-
 “ ments (as she did in the Case of sending away *Jacob*)
 “ and fobbing him off with a cunningly devis'd Tale:

H 3

“ And,

(*d*) *Le Clerc's* Commentary. (*e*) Gen. xxvii. 20. (*f*) Mal.
 i. 14. (*g*) Deut. xxvii. 18.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

Answer'd by
ſheewing
why the Pa-
triarchs
Wives were,
for ſome
Time, bar-
ren.

“ And, as to her Husband, whatever Boast may be made
“ of his *Greatness*, (*b*) even to outvie the Wealth and
“ Power of Kings; (*i*) yet *Jacob's* being sent away to
“ *Mesopotamia*, all alone, and without any Servant to at-
“ tend him in so long a Journey; *Eſau's* finding no kind
“ of Eatables in his Father's House, when he return'd from
“ hunting, so that (*k*) he was ready in a Manner to be
“ famiſh'd to death; *himself* being glad of a Piece of Ve-
“ niſon, whenever his Son *Eſau* cou'd catch it, and for
“ that Reason (*l*) *loving him* more than he did his Bro-
“ ther; and the great Rout and Buſtle, that we find him
“ ſo frequently making about a *Well*, that his Father had
“ dug, and therefore he thought his own Property, are
“ manifeſt Tokens, that his Circumſtances, at this Time,
“ were but ſtrait, and that (*m*) *his Poſſeſſion of Flocks,*
“ *and Poſſeſſion of Herds, and great Store of Servants,*
“ &c. might be deſign'd to give an *Heightening* to his Cha-
“ racter, but do not appear to be *Matters of Fact*.

NOTHING can be more obvious, than that the Promiſes,
which God was pleas'd to make to the Patriarchs, were
not to be accompliſh'd in their *Persons*, but in their *Po-*
ſterity. *Abraham* had but one Son by his *primary Wife*,
and *Iſaac* but two; and therefore the Bleſſing of a *nume-*
rous Off-ſpring could not be verifi'd in them; but in
Jacob it began to operate. He had twelve Sons; and
theſe, when in *Egypt* (notwithſtanding all Lets and Impe-
diments to the contrary) mightily increas'd; and, upon
their Return from thence, made up an Army ſufficient to
expel the old Inhabitants, and to take Poſſeſſion of the *Land*
of Promise, for thus it is that *Moses* beſpeaks the People:
(*n*) *Thy Fathers went down into Egypt, with threescore and*
ten Persons, and now the Lord thy God has made thee as
the Stars of Heaven for Multitude; wherein he alludes to
the very Words, in which the Promise, the *original Pro-*
miſe, was made.

IF then the numerous Poſterity, wherewith God bleſſed
the *Jewiſh* Patriarchs, did, in a due Courſe of Years, tho'
not *immediately* enſue, there is no Foundation for our cal-
ling in Queſtion his Truth and Veracity; but then his Wiſ-
dom, and Almighty Power are much more conſpicuous in
raiſing ſo large an Increaſe from ſo ſmall a Beginning. For,
beſides

(*b*) Gen. xxvi. 13, 16. (*i*) Chap. xxviii. 5. (*k*) Chap.
xxv. 32. (*l*) Chap. xxv. 28. (*m*) Gen. xxvi. 14. (*n*) Deut.
x. 22.

besides that the long Sterility of these holy Matrons gave a proper Occasion for the Exercise of Faith, and Patience, and Reliance on God, (o) it tended not a little to illustrate the Nobility of the *Jewish* Extraction, when it came to be considered, that their Progenitors were descended from Women that were *complexionally* unfruitful, and brought into the World at no less an Expence, than that of a Miracle. It shewed plainly, that the Multiplication of the *promis'd Seed* was not effected by any natural Succession, but by the divine Favour and Benediction. It prepar'd the Way for the Coming of the Son of God in the Flesh, and, as St. *Chrysostom* (p) expresses it, pre-dispos'd the World to the Belief of the miraculous *Conception* of the *Virgin Mary*. It administer'd Comfort to such married Women, as were childless, giving them Encouragement still to hope on, and restraining them from murmuring, or being impatient at any Retardation; and therefore we find the Angel, in his Address to the blessed Virgin, (both to enforce the Credibility of the Message, he brought her, and to revive the Hope of such, as were destitute of Children) expressing himself in this Manner; (q) *Behold thy Cousin Elizabeth, who was called barren, she also hath conceived a Son, in her old Age, for with God nothing shall be impossible*: And 'tis a glorious Demonstration of the sovereign Power of God, when (according to the Apostle's Manner of Expression) (r) *he chuses the weak Things of the World to confound the Things that are mighty, the base Things of the World, and the Things that are despised, yea, and the Things that are not, to bring to nought the Things that are, that no Flesh should glory in his Presence.*

THE same Apostle, in Relation to the Subject we are now upon, has, by a familiar Similitude, evinc'd the Right, which the great Ruler of the World has to make a Discrimination (as to the *Temporalities* I mean only) between Man and Man: For *bath not the Potter Power over the Clay, says he, of the same Lump, to make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour?* He who has a present Intuition of all Things future, knows, how every Person, when born into the World, will comport himself, and therefore, as he has the Right, so he is the only Being, that is duly qualified to allot Men their different Stations

H 4

tions

(o) *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar.* Vol. II. Exercit. 8. (p) In Gen. Ch. xlix. (q) Luke i. 36, 37. (r) 1 Cor. i. 27, &c.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

tions in Life ; but it is their different Stations in *this* Life, that God thus determines, and not any Necessity either of their happy or unhappy Condition in the next.

ESAU and *Jacob* were both in the Womb, when God thought fit to declare his Choice of the one, rather than the other, to be the Founder of the *Jewish* Nation, and of *whom*, according to the *Flesh*, *Christ* should come : And, as this was a Favour of a temporary Consideration only, and no ways affected their eternal State, I know of no Attribute of God that cou'd restrain him in this Option. *Loving* or *hating* are Terms of a strong Signification sometimes, but, that here they can mean no more than a bare Preference of one before another, is plain from the whole Tenour of the Apostle's Discourse. The Truth is, (s) his Words (as well as those of *Moses*) relate (as we said before) not to the *Persons*, but to the *Posterity* of *Jacob* and *Esau*, or not to them *personally*, but *nationally* consider'd. As to their *Persons*, it was never true, that the *Elder did serve the Younger*, but only as to their *Posterity*, when the (t) *Edomites* became *tributary* to *David* : And therefore the Apostle cannot be suppos'd here to discourse of any personal Election to eternal Life, or any absolute Love or Hatred of these two Brothers, with Respect to their Interest in another World, but only of the Election of one Seed, or Nation, before another, to be accounted and treated as the *Seed* of *Abraham*, which is all that the Apostle's Argument drives at.

IN a Word, the Case of these two Patriarchs has nothing to do with the *Election* or *Reprobation* of particular Persons. It shews us indeed, that God may make Choice of one Nation, rather than another, to be his *peculiar People* ; but to apply this to particular Persons, or to suppose that the Condition of Men's Souls, even before they come into the World, is determined by a fatal irrevocable *Decree*, is foreign to the Apostle's Meaning, and abhorrent to his Word, who has so plainly declared himself to be (u) *no Respector of Persons, but that in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, shall be accepted with him.*

The Birth-
right what.

(x) SOME are of Opinion, that the chief Prerogative of the *Primogeniture* was nothing else, but a double Portion of

(s) *Whitby* on Rom. ix. (t) 2 Sam. viii. 14. (u) Acts
x. 34, 35. (x) *Bibliotheca Bib.*

of the Father's Estate, and that this was all that *Esau* A. M. parted with to his Brother: But had this been so, we ^{2148, &c.} cannot see wherein he was so mightily to blame, or why ^{Ant. Christ.} the Apostle, who certainly understood the Meaning of the ^{1856, &c.} *Birth-right*, as well as any modern Commentator, should ^{From Gen.} give him the hard Name of a *profane Person*, merely for ^{xxv. 20. to} selling the Reversion of a temporal Estate, to save his Life, ^{Ch. xxviii. 8.} in a Time of the greatest Exigence. Had the Birth-right, I say, consisted chiefly in this, we cannot see how *Jacob* could have been reduced to the Straits, we afterwards find him in, or *Esau*, as to his outward Fortune, have flourish'd more prosperously, than his Brother did. When his Father *Isaac* died, and he came from Mount *Seir*, to assist in his Funeral, upon his Departure from his Brother, he is said to have (y) *carried away with him all the Substance, which he had got in the Land of Canaan.* (z) Now it is plain, that he had no Substance in the Land of *Canaan* of his own getting, for he liv'd at *Seir*, in the Land of *Edom*, beyond the Borders of *Canaan*; and therefore the Substance, which was gotten in the *Land of Canaan*, must be the Substance, which *Isaac* died possessed of, and which *Esau*, as his Heir, took along with him. So that, after the Birth-right was sold, He was still Heir to his Father's Substance; and therefore a Right to this was not the Thing, which *Jacob* purchas'd of him. Others are of Opinion, that the *Birth-right* was the Blessing, promised to the Seed of *Abraham*, and this the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* seems, in some measure, to favour; *Left there be any Fornicator, or profane Person, as Esau, who for a Morfel of Meat sold his Birth-right. For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected:* Where not inheriting the Blessing, seems to be connected with his having sold his Birth-right; as if, having parted with the one, he could not possibly obtain the other: But it is much to be question'd, whether this be the true Sense of the Passage. *Esau* himself, when he sold his Birth-right, did not imagine that he had sold, at the same Time, his Right to the Blessing; for when his Father told him, that his Brother had come with Subtilty, and taken away the Blessing, his Answer is, *Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he hath supplanted me these two Times; he took away my Birth-right, and behold*
now

(y) Gen. xxxvi. 6. (z) *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. I.
1. 7.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

now he hath taken away my Blessing? Had he apprehended that the Blessing, and Birth-right were Things inseparable, having sold the one, he would never have laid any Claim to the other; whereas the defrauding him of his Blessing is another Hardship he complains of, distinct, and different, and independent on the former: And therefore *Esau's* Birth-right was most probably his Right of being Priest, or Sacrificer for his Brethren; and for parting with this he is justly termed *profane*, because he hereby shew'd himself not to have a due Value and Esteem for the religious Employment, that belong'd to him.

Jacob censur'd,

BUT tho' this Employment might better comport with *Jacob*, yet we cannot pretend to justify him in his Method of obtaining it. (a) *Moses*, who records the Story, does not commend him for it, and therefore we are left at our Liberty to pass what Censure upon it we think reasonable. God indeed, before he was born, design'd and promis'd this Privilege to him; but (b) then he should have waited, until the divine Wisdom had found out the Means of executing his Promise, in his own Way, as *David* did, till God gave him possession of *Saul's* Kingdom, and not have anticipated God, and snatch'd it by an irregular Act of his own. In the whole Affair indeed, *Jacob* acted with a Subtilty, not at all becoming an honest Man. He knew that Delays were dangerous, and that his Brother's Consideration, or second Thoughts, might possibly spoil his Bargain; and therefore he requir'd Haste, both in the Sale, and in his Oath, and thereby incurr'd another Sin, in hurrying his Brother into an Oath by Precipitation, which he neither should have taken, nor *Jacob* have advis'd him to take, without mature Advice, and Deliberation.

AND, in like Manner, as to his Interception of the Blessing, which his Father design'd for his Brother *Esau*; it is in vain to have recourse to † forc'd Constructions, or
to

(a) *Bedford's* Scripture Chronology. (b) *Pool's* Annotations.

† Upon *Jacob's* answering his Father, *that he was Esau his First-Born*, the Rabbins are put to great Perplexity, how to as-soil the Patriarch from the Sin of Lying; and therefore some of them paraphrase the Words thus, — *I am*, i. e. *he*, who brings thee something to eat, *but Esau is thy eldest Son*; while others understand them in this Manner rather; *I am Esau*, i. e. *I am in his Stead*, because he has sold me his Birth-right: For, by this Sale, as *they tell us*, a proper Permutation being made of
Persons

to plead the Lawfulness of *mental Reservations*, in order to excuse him in the Lying and Dissimulation, wherein he was certainly culpable: The best Way is, upon this Occasion, to lament the Infirmary of human Nature, which cannot always stand upright, and to admire the Impartiality of the sacred Writings, in which the very Blemishes and Transgressions of such, as are design'd to make the *top Figure* therein, are not forgotten to be recorded.

(c) IT cannot be denied indeed, but that both *Jacob* and his Mother were justly to be prais'd, for having a due Esteem

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.



Wherein he
was com-
mendable.

Persons and Titles, the first became really last, and the last first, the Elder became the Younger, and the Younger the Elder, as to the Stile, and all the Privileges of *Eldership*; so that *Jacob* was, in reality, as much the Heir, and Successor of *Isaac*, as if *Esau* had been actually dead. And, tho' *Esau* was still alive, and had the Name of *Esau*, yet *Jacob* was properly (what his Brother had been) *his First-born Esau*, since *Esau* was reduc'd to the Station of a younger Brother only. St. *Austin*, [ad *Consentium de Mendacio*, c. 10.] pretends, that *Jacob's* Words have a Figure in them, much in the same Nature with that in the *Gospel*, where *John the Baptist* is called the *Elias*, that *shall come*; but the Misfortune is, that there was a great Similitude between *Elias* and the *Baptist*, as to their *Spirit* and Office, but between *Jacob* and *Esau* there was none at all; and therefore some other Fathers, seeing the Impossibility of explaining the Words, by any of these Subterfuges, have boldly asserted, that there was no Iniquity in the Lyes, which *Jacob* told, because they did not proceed from any malevolent Intent, but from a Design of promoting the greatest Good; for which End it was as lawful for a wise Man to employ officious Lyes, as it is to make use of Physick for the Preservation of Health: And, from such dangerous Positions as these, the *Jesuitical* Doctrine of *Equivocation*, and *mental Reservation*, has, in a great Measure, proceeded. "Quid vero faciemus hujus commatis hominibus, says our Author, qui hac ratione mendaciis, & perjuriis decumanam aperire portam non verentur? Conclamatem erit de pactorum omnium & contractuum fide, adeoque universæ societatis humanæ vinculo, si perversa ea sententia reciperetur. Quod si sanctus Patriarcha resurgeret, haud dubie illam audacissimorum hominum impietatem valde retunderet, & damnaret ipse: Tantum abest, ut ejusdem recordia se reum fecerit: Qui, si humanâ infirmitate lapsus est, at certe artificiosum illud & affectatum mentiendi genus minimè sectatus est." *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 14.*

(c) *Heidegger*, *ibid.*

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
2856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

Esteem of the *paternal* Benediction, and for their endeavouring to attain it; since this cou'd proceed from no other Motive, than a full Persuasion of the Truth of God's Promises and Covenant with *Abraham*. For, as the *paternal* Blessing was thought to be a Means instituted by God, for the Conveyance of this Covenant, it cou'd not but deserve their Care and Assiduity. It cannot be denied farther, but that if this Blessing was (as some imagine) an *Appendage* to the Birth-right, *Jacob*, in purchasing the one, had acquir'd a lawful Title to the other, a Title establish'd not only upon the express Designation of God, but by a *Deed of Sale* likewise, executed and ratified by a most solemn and sacred Oath. It cannot be denied likewise, but that, pursuant to this divine Designation, *Isaac* was obliged to have conferr'd his Blessing upon *Jacob*, and therefore his Wife, perceiving that he was going to promise the *Blessing of Abraham*, where his Affection led him to wish it, and not where she knew that God had design'd to bestow it, laid a Scheme, which induced her Husband to do that *unwittingly*, which God had pre-ordained was to be done, but what, she knew, her Husband would not do *knowingly* without some Uneasiness. Nay, it cannot be denied, once more, but that, (d) when her Artifice had succeeded, and *Jacob* was accordingly blessed, *Isaac* was so far from being displeas'd with his Wife, or angry with *Jacob* for imposing upon him, that we find him fully satisfy'd in what he had done; (e) *I have blessed him*, says he, *yea, and he shall be blessed*: Which sudden Change of Mind can be imputed to nothing else, but some divine *Inspiration*, which, at that Time, open'd his Understanding, and convinced him, that he had given the Blessing to the right Person.

Wherein
blamable.

THUS from the Consideration of *Jacob's* Right, and *Isaac's* Duty, the Goodness of the End, the Pre-ordination of God, and his Approbation of the Thing, when done, may be drawn some Arguments, to alleviate their Crime; but still we must ingenuously own, (f) that *Rebekah* was guilty of a Fault, in suggesting such dangerous Advice to her Son; that *Jacob* committed another, in suffering himself to be seduced by so bad a Guide; and that both of them presum'd to limit the Power of God, by thinking that a Complication of Frauds was necessary for the Accomplishment

(d) *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 7. (e) Gen. xxvii.
33. (f) *Saurin's* Dissertation xxv.

ment of a divine Prophecy. (g) Had *Rebekah* indeed put her Husband in Remembrance of this Prophecy, and shewn how *Eſau* had forfeited the Blessing by selling his Birth-right, and by marrying strange Wives, this had been a much more honourable Proceeding; but therefore she was left to pursue her own indiscreet Method, that God might have the Honour of serving his own Purposes by the Follies of Men.

BUT how culpable soever *Rebekah* may be thought in this Instance, yet there is not the like Imputation upon her in hiding from her Husband the true Reason of her sending away *Jacob*. (h) It is certainly a Point of great Prudence to conceal Truth, when the Discovery of it will occasion more Harm than Good; and therefore, that she might not afflict her Husband's old Age with the unwelcome News of his Son *Eſau*'s wicked Intent against his Brother, and thereby provoke his Indignation against him; she cover'd the Dismissal of *Jacob* with a Reason, that was true indeed, but not that chief and latent one, which gave her the most Uneasiness, and which, if communicated to her Husband, might have been a Means of bringing his grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave. So that, in the whole, and according to the Proverbs of the Wise Man, she acted the Part both of a careful Wife, and a prudent Woman, for (i) the Tongue of the Wise useth Knowledge aright, and she, (k) that is of a faithful Spirit, concealeth the Matter.

WHEN *Abraham* sent his Servant into *Mesopotamia* to negotiate a Marriage for his Son *Isaac*, he had an Equipage appointed him, suitable to the Dignity of his Master, that God might be more honour'd by so fine an Appearance, and his Veracity publickly justified, in the Advancement of that *Abraham*, who had quitted all to follow him; but we shall soon perceive, that there was not the like Reason for *Isaac*'s sending away his Son *Jacob* with such an honourable Retinue, if we do but consider, (l) that the Family of *Nabor* was already sufficiently apprised of the divine Blessing, which had attended *Abraham* and his Family; that, as *Rebekah* was Sister to *Laban*, the Head of the Family, there was no need of any farther Recommendation, than that of a Letter to her Brother; that, in this Affair, it was Prudence to make *Jacob* appear as little, as might be, in order to give the less Umbrage to his Brother, and, if possible, to appease his Resentment; that it was highly expedient for *Jacob*, to tread in

(g) *Millar's History of the Church*, c. 1. Period 3. (h) *Heidegger's Hist. Patriarch*. Vol. II. Exercit. 14. (i) *Prov.* xv. 2. (k) *Chap.* xi. 13. (l) *Bibliotheca Bib.* in *Gen.* xxviii. 5.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

in the Steps of his Grandfather *Abraham*, whose Heir he was now become, and should therefore depart from *his Father's House*, and cast himself entirely upon the Providence of God for his Subsistence, even as he had done; and that it was necessary for him to give a Demonstration, that it was not merely (as some suppose) an *earthly Inheritance*, which he had purchased, or a *secular Blessing*, which he had acquired, but that there was something far greater (tho' not discernible by every common Eye) which he had in View in this Acquisition: For (*m*) his *confessing*, in this Manner, *that he was but a Stranger and Pilgrim on Earth*, (notwithstanding the Right of Primogeniture in him) *declared plainly*, that, as *Heir of the Promise* with *Abraham* and *Isaac*, he was *seeking a better Country*, than either that, from whence he departed, or that, whereunto he was sent, *i. e. an heavenly*.

Esau's Hunger upon his Return from Hunting.

FROM these, and such like Considerations, and not from any Family Poverty, it was, that *Jacob*, was sent into *Mesopotamia*, all alone; and without any Attendance: And, in like Manner, when *Esau*, upon his Return from Hunting, complains of his extreme Hunger, we can scarce suppose, that he found nothing at home to eat; except the *Pottage*, which his Brother had made. Frugality indeed was a Virtue of much more Esteem among the *Antients*, than it is among us; but it is hard to imagine, how *Isaac*, who was a Man confessedly of a plentiful Estate, and had doubtless a large Family to maintain, should keep a House utterly destitute of all Manner of Eatables. Provision there was no doubt enough; but *Esau's* Fancy ran upon something else. He longed, greedily longed for the *Soop*, and the *Soop* he would have, whatever it cost. Its Flavour and Colour had enticed him, and every Thing he resolved to part with, rather than not gratify the present Cravings of an intemperate Appetite. And, accordingly, we may observe, (*n*) that his reasoning upon this Occasion was not, that he was ready to die for *Famine*, and therefore would part with his Birthright; but that, according to his Course of Life, and the Perils, which he, every Day, ran in Hunting, in all Probability he would not survive his Father, and his *Birth-right*, of consequence, would avail him nothing; and therefore, having but a slender Opinion of what was to come hereafter, he made his Conclusion, much in the same Form, with the *Epicurean* in

(*m*) Heb. xi. 9. 10.
Exercit. 12.

(*n*) *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar.* Vol. II.

in the Prophet, (o) *Let us eat and drink, for To-morrow we die.* A. M. 2148, &c. Ant. Chris. 1856, &c.

WHOEVER considers the Chronology of that Transaction, will find that (p) *Isaac* lived about forty Years after his parting with his *prophetical* Blessing; and consequently, (q) that it was not old Age, but some Sickneſs and Indispoſition of Body, that, at this Time, had ſeized him, and made him apprehenſive of his approaching Death. In this Condition, it is no uncommon Thing, we know, for Men's Thoughts to run upon one Kind of Meat rather than another, and when the Stomach is deprav'd, or any ways out of order, generally to long for ſuch Things, as are of a ſavoury Taſte: And, if Veniſon, in thoſe Countries, was more particularly adapted to that Purpoſe, wherein, I pray, is *Isaac* to be blam'd, for loving a Son, who took ſuch Pains, and expos'd himſelf to ſuch Dangers, that he might ſhew his Reſpect to his aged Father, and procure him now and then *ſome little Thing*, to pleaſe his Palate, and humour his ſickly Appetite? Thoſe, who think proper to blame the Patriarch's kind Reſentment of ſuch Aſſiduity, ſeem to have forgot the Workings of human Nature, and how apt the very wiſeſt of Parents are to have their Affections won, every Day more and more, by the Sedulity and Officiouſneſs of their Children.

Isaac's loving Eſau for his Veniſon.

THE dreſſing this Veniſon is repreſented indeed as a Province, which *Eſau* himſelf took upon him; and to have the eldeſt Son and Heir of a Family *ſtand Cook* (as we call it) ſeems to portend no great Wealth or Magnificence in it; but when we urge this, we forget the *Simplicity* of the Times, wherein *Moſes* wrote, and wherein it was customary for Men of the firſt Rank to ſubmit to Offices, much meaner than this. Herein then do the Truth and Authority of the *ſacred Hiſtory* moſt eminently appear, that all its Accounts and Deſcriptions of Things do agree with the *Senſe* of the moſt antient Writers, and are found conformable to the *Manners and Cuſtoms*, that then prevailed.

AND, in like manner, we may ſay, that (r) it is our Ignorance of the *patriarchal* Manner of living, which makes us think it unaccountable to hear, in thoſe early Days, of ſo many Conteſts about Wells. For, were we to take a nearer Inſpection into the Thing, we ſhould ſoon find, that in thoſe hot Countries, where Water was ſo very ſcarce, a *Well*, or Fountain of living Water, was a Poſſeſſion of in-eſtimable

And his conteſting his Right to ſeveral Wells, are all no Reſlection upon the Patriarch.

(o) *Iſa.* xxii. 13. Annotations.

(p) *Gen.* xxxv. 28, 29. (q) *Le Clerc's Bibliotheca Bib. Occaf. Annot.* 29.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

estimable Value; and for this Reason we find *Moses*, in magnifying the divine Bounty to the Children of *Israel*, among other Parts of the *Inventory*, reckoning up, not only (s) *great and goodly Cities, which they built not*, but *WELLS likewise digged, which they digged not*.

(t) NOR was it only for the Benefit of the Water, that these Wells were held in so high Esteem, but for the Memory of the *Events* and *Transactions* likewise, which were known to have happened near them. For at these Wells Angels had appeared, Miracles had been wrought, religious Assemblies held, Treaties transacted, Marriages celebrated, and Towns and Cities built; and therefore no Wonder, that the *Antients*, looking upon them as *sacred*, as well as profitable Places, shou'd be so ready to contest their Right to them, or that frequent Notice should be taken of them in so compendious an History, as that of the *Patriarchs*.

THE Truth is, these, and perhaps some other Occurrences in the Life of this Patriarch (tho' to us they may seem strange and incongruous) do not argue any Want or Poverty, but are exactly agreeable to that Temperance, and Simplicity of Living, which, in his Days, were in Vogue. He, who was, in a Manner, sole Heir of his Father *Abraham*, (who was * a King in the Opinion of some, but, in all Accounts, a Person of great Affluence of Fortune) and who himself had made Additions to it, enough to be envied even by neighbouring Princes, could not possibly want any necessary Accommodation of Life, nor wou'd he concern himself with Things of a trifling Consideration: But what we call Trifles, might, in those Times, be Matters of the last Importance; and, what we account Indications of Poverty, might proceed from no other Cause, but that Frugality and Parcimony, * which, in the primitive Ages, were in high Repute,

(s) Deut. vi. 11. (t) *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 7.

* The Words of *Nicolaus Damascenus* (as they are quoted by *Josephus*) are these. — “ *Abraham* reign'd in *Damascus*, being a Stranger, who came out of the Land of *Chaldea*, beyond *Babylon*. His Name is, at this Day, famous about the Country of *Damascus*, and they shew us the Town, which, from him, is call'd *Abraham's Dwelling*”. *Grotius de Verit.* l. 1. §. 16.

* The Manner of living, in the early Ages of the World, seems to be very well expressed by the *Roman Satyr*ist.

Credo pudicitiam, Saturno Rege, morantem
In terribus, visamque diu; cum frigida parvas

Præberet

Repute, before they came to be discountenanc'd by the present Schemes of Expence, and studied Luxury. And therefore, when we find, (u) in antient History, the *Arcadians*, feeding upon Acorns; the *Argives*, upon Apples; the *Athenians*, upon Figs; &c. when we find * a Set of the most renown'd Heroes in the *Grecian Army*, even in the great *Achilles's* Tent, dining upon a Loin of Mutton, and an Hock of Bacon; and the *Godlike Man Patroclus* lighting the Fire, while the Master of the Feast was spitting the Meat; our Wonder may cease, if, in Ages before this, we meet with such an homely Dish, as *Lentil-Pottage*, in a Patriarch's House, and the two Sons of the Family condescending to cook their own Victuals. This we must own is not the Practice among us; but it is a much more consistent and credible Account of Things, than if *Moses* had represented *Isaac's* Tent like a *royal Palace*, and every Thing serv'd up there in the same splendid Manner, as when the King and his Family *dine in publick*.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 2.

D I S S E R-

Præberet spelunca domus, ignemque, laremque,
Et pecus, & Dominos, communi clauderet umbrâ.
Sylvestrem montana torum cum sterneret uxor
Frondebis, & culmo, vicinarumque ferarum
Pellibus. —————
Et sæpe horridior glandem ructante marito. *Juven. Sat. 6.*

(u) *Ælian de Variâ Historiâ. l. 3.*

* When the *Grecians* sent an Embassy to *Achilles*, desiring him to be reconcil'd to *Agamemnon*, and to return to the Camp; the Deputies, appointed for this Purpose, were *Phœnix*, *Ajax*, and *Ulysses*, and the Entertainment, which *Achilles*, upon this Occasion, gave them, is thus describ'd, and in this Manner said to have been dress'd, by the Poet.

————— Πάτροκλος δὲ φίλῳ ἐπεπεΐθεθ' ἑταίρῳ.
Αὐτὰρ ὅγε κρείττον' ἰδέσθαι καὶ ἑταίρῳ ἐν πυρὸς ἀγῶνι,
Ἐν δὲ ἄρα ῥῶτον ἔθηκε' ὄϊον, καὶ πῖον αἰγός.
Ἐν δὲ σὺς σιάλοιο ῥάχιν τεταλυσῖαν ἀλοιφῇ.
Τῷ δ' ἔχεν Αὐτομέδων τάμνεν δ' ἄρα δι' Ἀχιλλεύς.
Καὶ τὰ μὲν εὖ μίσγυλλε, καὶ ἄμφ' ὕψηλοῖσιν ἔπειρε
Πῦρ δὲ Μενοισιάδης δαΐεν μέγα, ἰσόθεος Φῶς.
Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ ῥ' ὤπλισε, καὶ εἰν ἑλισσίν ἔχευε,
Πάτροκλος μὲν σῖτον ἑλὼν ἐπένειμε τραπέζῃ,
Καλοῖς ἐν κανέοισιν ἄτ' ἀρ' κρέα νεῖμεν Ἀχιλλεύς.

A. M.
2143, *ſc.*
Ant. Chriſt.
1856, *ſc.*
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii. 8.

DISSERTATION II.

Of Iſaac's Bleſſing to Jacob.

The HISTORY.

*The firſt In-
ſtitution of
theſe Kind of
Bleſſings.*

FROM the Time, that God made the Covenant with Abraham, and promis'd Bleſſings extraordinary to his Seed, it was cuſtomary for the Father of each Family, ſome Time before he died, to call together his Children, and to inform them, according to the Knowledge, which it pleas'd God then to give him, how, and in what Manner, the *Bleſſing of Abraham* was to deſcend among them. Whence this Cuſtom had its Original, whether from the immediate Appointment of God, or from ſome ſecret Impulſe, where-with the Patriarchs, upon the Approach of their Departure, found themſelves affected, the Silence of Scripture will not ſuffer us to determine; but this we may ſafely infer, (*x*) that this *Benediction* was different from thoſe *private* Bleſſings, which the Patriarchs gave their Children upon ſundry Occaſions, and different likewiſe from thoſe *publick* Bleſſings, which the Priests, and others in Authority, were wont to diſtribute among the People. It proceeded from an extraordinary *Illumination*, and had the Proſpect of Futurity (ſo far as was neceſſary for its Purpoſe) ſubmitted to its Inſpection. The Perſons, upon whom it came, had, for that Time, the Spirit of *Divination*, and what they utter'd, under its Influence, was deem'd a *prophetick Oracle*, denoting infallible Events, and extending to the utmoſt Period of Time.

*Why Iſaac
deſired to
eat, before
he pronounc'd
his Bleſſing.*

THE *Jews* indeed have a proverbial Saying, that the Spirit of Prophecy does not fall upon the Melancholick; and thence they ſuppoſe, that, as good Eating and Drinking are known to exhilarate the Spirits, the Patriarch, by ſending his Son to take Veniſon, was minded to make uſe of that Expedient, that he might be the better diſpos'd to receive the divine Inſpiration, and to pronounce the propheticall Benediction with Chearfulneſs, and with a Warmth and Emotion, ſufficient to excite that Attention, which the Prophecy, he was about to deliver, did require.

(*y*) BUT as no one in his Senſes can imagine, that a Perſon, when perfectly ſober, is not as capable of the Spirit of Prophecy, as he that has plentifully din'd; others, from the

Phraſe,

(*x*) Heidegger's Hiſt. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 7.
Clerc's Commentary.

(*y*) Le

Phrase, *that I may bless thee* BEFORE THE LORD, suppose (z) that *Isaac's* eating, in order to receive the Spirit of Benediction, was by him design'd to be *sacramental*, and accompany'd with some religious Rites, and solemn Invocations, tho' they happen not to be here mention'd. But this Supposition being as precarious, as the other, the safest Way is to resolve the whole Matter into the *Providence* of God, (a) who put *Isaac* into the Head of sending out *Esau* for Venison, neither to refresh his Spirits by eating, nor to perform any religious Act, but merely, by his Absence, to give *Jacob* an advantageous Opportunity of appropriating the Blessing to himself.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii.

ISAAC indeed meant not this, neither was it in his Heart to bless *Jacob*; and therefore, if we suppose that *Rebekah* had acquainted him with the Prophecy, which directed him to transfer the Blessing upon *Jacob*, we must suppose withal, (b) that he had now forgot it, or never rightly understood it, or apprehended, that it was to be accomplish'd, not in the Persons of *Esau* and *Jacob*, but in their Posterity (c); for it is much better to charge the *Patriarch* with want of Attention or Understanding, than with Disobedience and Prevarication.

Why he intended it for *Esau*.

HOWEVER this be, the Blessing, which he pronounces over *Jacob* by Mistake, is conceived in these Words: *God give thee of the Dew of Heaven*, (because, in hot Countries, where Showers were less frequent, the Morning and Evening Dews were a great Refreshment to the Earth, and productive of much Plenty :) *and the Fatness of the Earth*, (because *Canaan*, the Lot of his Inheritance, was a fruitful, and therefore (d) by the Prophet call'd, *a fat Land*;) *and Plenty of Corn and Wine*, (Abundance of every Product of the Earth.) *Let People serve thee*, (i. e. the *Idumæans*, who shall descend from thy Brother *Esau*, as they did in the Days of *David*;) *and Nations bow down unto thee*, (the Kingdoms of *Arabia* and *Syria*, who are sprung from *Hagar* and *Keturah*;) *Be Lord over thy Brethren, and let thy Mother's Son bow down unto thee*, (have thou the Dominion and Prerogative in thine own Family) *Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that bleisseth thee*; for God shall so far interest himself in thy Cause, as to esteem those his Friends or Foes, who shall behave themselves, as such, to thee. So that the Blessing consists properly

The Benediction itself explained.

A. M.
2143, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii.
8.

perly of three Branches: In the 1st is contain'd worldly Plenty and Prosperity: In the 2d, Dominion and Empire: And in the 3d, Family Pre-eminence, as well as the divine Protection: But then the Question is, in what Sense all this is to be understood, and to what Branch, the peculiar *Blessing of Abraham*, (which is doubtless compris'd herein) may be suppos'd to belong?

If we look back (*e*) to the call of *Abraham*, and the Promises which attended it, there we shall find, (*f*) that, after enumerating the temporal Blessings, which were to descend from *Abraham* to his Posterity, one Blessing is added, in which all the World has an Interest, and which was convey'd to them thro' *Abraham* and his Seed; *In thee*, says God, *shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed*.

If we proceed to the Blessing, which he was pleased to give to his Son *Isaac*, we shall find a Recital of the same Kinds of temporal Prosperity; a numerous Progeny promis'd, the Grant of the Land of *Canaan* renew'd, the Oath, given unto *Abraham*, confirm'd, and then follows the great and distinguishing Promise (*g*), *in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*. And, in like Manner, we cannot but imagine, that, in this great and solemn Blessing, which *Isaac* is giving his Son *Jacob*, there must be something of a spiritual Nature compris'd, tho' couched under Terms, which seem to denote worldly Felicity only.

That there
is a spiritual
Sense and
Meaning in
it.

THE Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, that (*h*) by *Faith* *Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning Things to come*; and what we are to understand by *Faith* he instructs us in the Conclusion of his Discourse; *and these all* (meaning the Patriarchs, he had mentioned before) *having obtained a good Report through Faith, received not the Promise, God having provided some better Thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect*. So that this Faith did chiefly relate to the *blessed Seed*, which was promised in the Beginning, and from continued Tradition, and divine Revelation, in every succeeding Age, embraced by the *Faithful*; and therefore we can hardly suppose, but that, in this great *prophetical* Benediction, there must be something concerning this *Seed*, implied, at least, if not, expressed.

WHOEVER takes but a cursory View of some of the chief Passages of *Jacob's* Life, will soon perceive, that, had his Father's Blessing consisted of worldly Advantages only,
it

(*e*) Gen. xii. (*f*) Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy.
(*g*) Gen. xxvi. 4. (*h*) Heb. xi. 20.

it was, in a Manner, quite lost upon him, since few Men enjoyed a less Share of that, than he, who was forc'd from his Home, into a far Country, for fear of his Brother; receiv'd and oppress'd by his Uncle; and, (i) after a Servitude of above twenty Years, compelled to flee from him; while, at the same Time, he was in imminent Danger, either of being pursu'd and brought back by *Laban*, or fallen upon, and murth'ed by *Esau*. These Fears were no sooner over, but the Baseness of his eldest Son, in defiling his Couch; the Treachery and Cruelty of the two next, in Relation to the *Shechemites*; the Loss of his beloved Wife, and the supposed untimely Death of his Son *Joseph*; to say nothing of his being compelled by Famine to go down into *Egypt*, and there die: These, and many more Instances, are Proofs sufficient, that his Father's Blessing was of a different Nature. For, supposing it to relate to temporal Prosperity and Dominion only, wherein can we say that *Jacob* had the Pre-eminence above his Brother? (k) If *Jacob* was blessed with the Dew of Heaven, and the Fatness of the Earth; *Esau's* Blessing (at least according to our Translation) in this Respect is not inferior; *Thy Dwelling*, says his Father, *shall be the Fatness of the Earth, and of the Dew of Heaven from above.* If Nations were to bow down to *Jacob*; *Esau* likewise was to live and prevail by his Sword. If *Jacob's* Brethren were to bow down to him; yet, the Time would come, when *Esau* should have Dominion, and break even this Yoke from off his Neck. Thus, if we interpret the whole Blessing of temporal Prosperity only, the two Brothers seem to stand upon an Equality; and yet it is evident, from the whole Story, that the chief Blessing, which their Father had to bestow, was fallen upon *Jacob*, and therefore he tells *Esau*, when he pressed him for a Blessing upon himself likewise; *Behold I have made him thy Lord, and all his Brethren have I given unto him for Servants, and with Corn and Wine have I sustained him, and what shall I do now unto thee, my Son?* And when *Esau* still urges his Father, and his Father thereupon blesses him, we may observe, that, of Corn, and Wine, and temporal Power, he gives him a full, and an equal Share; but then there is this Limitation in the Blessing, *Thou shalt serve thy Brother*: So that, whatever was peculiarly given to *Jacob*, was contain'd in the Grant of being Lord over his Brethren;

I 3

and

(i) Universal History, l. 1. c. 7.
and Intent of Prophecy, Disc. 5.

(k) Bishop *Sherlock's* Use

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii.
8.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii.
8.

and yet the History of the two Brothers will not allow us to expound it of any temporal Dominion; for if we should, see how the Case will stand. (l) *Jacob is to rule over Esau*, and yet no sooner is the Blessing given, but he flies his Country for fear of *Esau*; he lives abroad for many Years; and, when he returns, the Fear and Dread of his Brother returns with him; so that his only Refuge, in this his Distress, was to God; (m) *Deliver me, I pray thee, from the Hand of my Brother, from the Hand of Esau*. When he sends a Message to him, he styles himself, (n) *Thy Servant Jacob*: When he meets him, (o) *he bows himself to the Ground seven Times, until he comes near to Esau*: When he speaks to him, he calls him *Lord*; and when he is kindly received by him, he says, (p) *I have seen thy Face, as though I had seen the Face of God, and thou wert pleased with me*. What is there in all this, that shews any *Rule and Dominion* given to *Jacob* over his Brother *Esau*?

AND, in like Manner, if we imagine the Prophecy relates to temporal Dominion only, and yet was fulfilled in the *Posterity* of these two Brothers, the Question will be, how the Case, upon this Supposition, stands. (q) The Family of *Esau* was settled in Power and Dominion many Years, before *Jacob's* Family had any certain Dwelling-Place. The *Dukes and Kings* of *Esau's* House are reckon'd up; and the Historian tells us, that (r) *these are the Kings, who reigned in the Land of Edom, before there reigned any King over the Children of Israel*. When the appointed Time was come for establishing the House of *Israel*, and giving them the Land and Possessions of their Enemies, the Family of *Esau* were, by a particular Decree, exempted from the Dominion of *Israel*: For so the Lord commanded *Moses*, (s) *Ye are to pass through the Coast of your Brethren, the Children of Esau.—Take ye good Heed unto yourselves therefore; meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their Land, no not so much as a Foot-breadth*. In the Time of *David* indeed, (t) *they of Edom became his Servants*; but, in the Days of *Jehoram*, they recovered again, (u) *and made a King over themselves*, and, in the Time of *Abaz*, they revenged the Affront, (x) *by smiting Judah, and leading*

(l) Ibid. (m) Gen. xxxii. 11. (n) Ver. 20. (o) Chap. xxxiii. 3. (p) Ver. 10. (q) Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy, Disc. 5. (r) Gen. xxxvi. 31. (s) Deut. ii. 4, 5. (t) 2 Sam. xviii. 14. (u) 2 Kings viii. 20. (x) 2 Chron. xxviii. 17.

ing them away Captives. So that, this Variety of Fortune, between the Children of *Jacob* and *Esau*, could never be the Thing intended, or meant to be described, when the Promise was given to *Jacob*, that his Mother's Children should bow down unto him.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1856, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20. to
Ch. xxviii.
8.

WHAT then is the hidden Purpose of the Words, and in what Sense are they to be taken? Why, it seems pretty evident, that the Blessing, given to *Jacob*, and expressed in Words implying a Rule over his Brethren, was a Conveyance of his Birth-right to him, in the Family of *Abraham*; that the Birth-right in *Abraham's* Family, (besides the Promise of the Land of *Canaan*) respected the special Blessing given unto *Abraham* by God; and that this special Blessing denoted no other, than that *Person*, in whom all Families of the Earth were to be blessed, and that is *Christ*. For, (y) that the Regard of all *Nations* to the *Seed*, in which they were *all to be blessed*, should be expressed by their *bowing down to him*, is no hard Figure of Speech; and that the Superiority of *Jacob's* Family shou'd, one Day, be broken (as the Promise to *Esau* sets forth) when *Jews* and *Gentiles* shou'd equally become the People of God, and all *Nations* be equally *blessed*, is no more, than what the original Covenant contains. Upon the whole then we may observe, that this Prediction had its full Accomplishment, neither in the *Person* of *Jacob*, nor in his *Posterity* in general, but only in *one*, who, as to his human Nature, in the Fullness of Time, descended from him, and (z) *who, being in the Form of God* (as the Apostle acquaints us with both his Natures) *and thinking it no Robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men, and being found in Fashion as a Man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.* Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of *Jesus* every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in the Earth, and Things under the Earth, and that every Tongue shall confess, that *Jesus Christ* is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

What that
Meaning is?

SINCE this Part of the Blessing then, which *Isaac* bestowed upon *Jacob*, was of such high Import, as to refer ultimately to the Person of our blessed Saviour, and his Ex-

Why it was
not revoked.

(y) Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy, Disc. 5.
(z) Phil. ii. 6, &c.

A. M.
2148, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1846, &c.
From Gen.
xxv. 20 to
Ch. xxviii.
8.

altation into Glory ; this may suggest a Reason to us, why, tho' it was certainly obtain'd by Guile, it was not afterwards revok'd, but ratified rather and confirm'd, even when his Father came to understand the Imposition. For if (a) *Prophecy came not, of old Time, by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, (b) then is *Isaac*, in this Action, to be consider'd only as the *instrumental*, and God as the *principal* Cause ; the Efficacy of the Blessing therefore must be supposed to depend, not on his Will and Intention, but on God's Ordination and Appointment ; and, consequently, *Isaac* could have no Right or Authority to disannul the Blessing, had he been minded so to do. (c) But it is much more likely, that the Remembrance of the Prophecy concerning the two Children, which *Rebekah* had vouchsafed her, before they were born, might, at this Time, come to strike him ; and, seeing he had in his Blessing (tho' not designedly) confirmed the same, he might very well impute it to an over-ruling Providence, and so be concluded by the divine Determination ; in which Sense that Passage, relating to *Esau*, in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is most proper to be applied : (d) *We know, how that afterward, when he would have inherited a Blessing, he was rejected: For he found no Place of Repentance, tho' he sought it carefully with Tears.* But how was *Esau* rejected from inheriting a Blessing, when we find, that, upon his Importunity with his Father, he obtained one? He obtained a Blessing indeed, but not *that*, which, by hereditary Right, belonged to the First-born, and abounded with Blessings, both spiritual and temporal. This his Brother *Jacob* had supplanted him of ; and yet he could not prevail with his Father to revoke it. He could not bring him to *change his Mind*, (as it is in the Margin) and *repent* of the Blessing, he had given to *Jacob*, (for (e) it is *Isaac's* Repentance, not *Esau's*, that is here under Consideration) although he sought it *with Tears* ; and the Reason is,—because his Father knew, both by the Conduct of Providence in this whole Affair, and by a particular Inspiration at that Time, that the peculiar Blessings, promis'd to *Abraham*, and *his Seed*, did not belong to him, but, by the divine Appointment, were now consign'd to his Brother,

and

(a) 2 Pet. i. 21. (b) *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 14. (c) *Le Clerc's* Commentary. (d) Heb. xii. 17. (e) *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 14.

and his Posterity; and therefore, to silence all farther Clamour, he tells him, with a more than ordinary *Emphasis*, and Inflexibility, (f) *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.*

(f) Gen. xxvii. 33.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10.
to Ch.
xxxvii.

CHAP III.

Of the Life of JACOB, from his going into Mesopotamia, to his Return.

The HISTORY.

AS soon as *Jacob* had receiv'd his Father's Charge and Blessing, he departed privately from *Beer-sheba*, and made the best of his Way to *Haran*; but after his first Day's Journey *, happening to be benighted, he was forced to

* The *Jews* tell of several Miracles, which they suppose to have been wrought on the very Day that *Jacob* set out from *Beer-sheba*; but one more especially, *viz.* that God shortened the Hours, by causing the Sun to go down before its Time; and yet we are told, that from *Beer-sheba* to *Luz*, where he lodged the first Night, were about 48 *English* Miles, which was no inconsiderable Day's Journey. If there be any Meaning therefore in this Fiction of theirs, it must consist in this, — That *Jacob* was sent away with his Father's Blessing, and, in Virtue of that, was filled with a certain divine Power, which supported, and carried him on with Pleasure, so that the Day might thence seem shorter to him; and, tho' his Father sent no Friend or Dometick along with him, yet there is no doubt to be made, but that there was a Companion and Guardian of a far nobler Order assigned him, who led him by the Hand, as it were, and kept him in all his Ways. *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

† The Place where *Jacob* took up his Lodging, was near *Luz*, which signifies an *Almond*, and might very likely have its Name from the many Groves of Almond-Trees, which were thereabouts; and under some of which, it is not unlikely that *Jacob* might take up his Lodging, because the Largeness of their Leaves, in that Country, wou'd afford no incommodious Shelter from the Weather. *Jacob*, upon the Account of the Vision, which he had in this Place, called it *Bethel*; and the *Israelites*, when they conquer'd *Canaan*, in Remembrance of the same,

A. M. 2149, &c.
Ant. Chrif. 1855, &c.
From Gen. xxviii. 10.
to Ch. xxxviii.



to take up his Lodging in the open Air, with the fpangled Sky to be his *Canopy*, and an hard Stone his *Pillow*. However, while he fleep, he thought he faw a *Ladder* fix'd upon the Earth, and reaching up to Heaven, with Angels afcending and defcending on it; and, from the Top of this Ladder, he heard God fpeaking unto him, and promifing him (even as he had done his Fore-Fathers) the Land of *Canaan* for his Inheritance; a large and numerous Pofterity; the *Meffias* to defcend from his Family; a fafe Return to his native Country; and the divine Protection and Preferuation every where to attend him.

THIS, in all Probability, was the firft Vouchsafement of this Kind, which *Jacob* ever had; and his Dream had made fuch Impreffion upon him, that, as foon as he awak'd, he paid an awful Reverence to the Place, and, after a fhort Contemplation of what had paffed, broke out into this Rapture of Wonder and Admiration; “*How venerable is this Place*, over which are vertically the Palace of God, “and the *Gate of Heaven*, through which the holy Angels are continually iffuing out, to execute the divine “Commands!” And when he arofe, he erected the Stone, whereon he fleep, and (as the Cuftom of thofe Times was) † pour'd Oil upon it, and then, in pious Commemoration of the heavenly Vifion, called the Place, (which before was called *Luz*) by the Name of *Bethel*, i. e. the Houfe of God. But, before he went from thence, he made a † fo-
lemn

fame, continu'd the Name. It lay to the Weft of *Hai*, about eight Miles to the North of *Jerufalem*, in the Confines of the Tribes of *Ephraim* and *Benjamin*. So that, upon the Revolt of the ten Tribes, it belonged to the Kingdom of *Israel*, and was therefore one of the Cities, where *Jeroboam* fet up his golden Calves; whence the Prophet *Hofea* [Chap. iv. 15.] alluding to the Name given it by *Jacob*, calls it *Beth-arven*, inftead of *Bethel*, i. e. the Houfe of Vanity or Idols, inftead of the Houfe of God. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Wells's Geography*, of the Old Teftament, Vol. I.

† Hence it feems evident, that *Jacob* did not leave his Father's Houfe, without being firft provided for his Journey; for it cannot be thought, that, if he wanted other Neceffaries, he would have carried Oil along with him, and that in fuch Plenty, as to pour it out, in fuch a feemingly profufe Manner, upon an inanimate Subject. *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

† Several Annotators have obferv'd, that this is the firft *Vow*, that we read of in Scripture; but this is no Reason for our fuppofing,

lemn Vow to God, " That, if he would protect and pro- A. M.
 " sper him in his Journey, provide him with † common ^{2149, &c.}
 " Neecessaries in his Absence, and grant him an happy Re- ^{Ant. Christ.}
 " turn to his Father's House; to him alone would he direct ^{1855, &c.}
 " his religious Worship; in that very Place where the ^{From Gen.}
 " Pillar stood, upon his Return, would he make his devout ^{xxviii. 10.}
 " Acknow- ^{to Ch.}
 " ^{xxxvii.}

supposing, that *Jacob* was the first, who worshipped in this
 Manner, but rather that in *this* he did no more, than what his
 Fathers, *Abraham* and *Isaac*, had done before him, and as they
 had instructed him, both by Example and Precept. As for
Abraham, tho' there be no mention made expressly of a *Vow*,
 yet very certain it is, that in effect he did the same Thing.
 For, when the Lord is said to have *made a Covenant with him*,
Abraham, on his Part, must be supposed to express his Consent
 and Acceptation of it; and not only so, but to vow and pro-
 mise to perform the Conditions, in order to attain the Benefit of
 it. And, in like Manner, when *Isaac* is said to have *intreated*
the Lord for his Wife, 'tis highly probable, that he vowed a *Vow*
 to God, that, upon his Performance of the Promise of multi-
 plying his Seed, &c. he would, on his Part, as an Acknowledg-
 ment of it, make some or other suitable Return; for the Word,
 which we render *intreat*, in its Original, has a much stronger
 Signification, and denotes a soliciting of Favours, whether from
 God or Man, by Gifts, Vows, or Promises. So that we may
 justly conclude, that his Son did not do this of his own Head,
 or upon an immediate Revelation commanding him so to do,
 but that he was before taught, and instructed by his Father in
 this Solemnity, as a Part of both *natural* and *positive* Religion.
Biblioth. Biblica.

† *Jacob's* Words, upon this Occasion, are, *If God will give*
me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, which two Articles com-
 prize all the Neecessaries of Life, and therefore we find them,
 in the Writings of the Philosophers, always put together. For
these are the Bounds, says *Seneca*, [Ep. 4.] *which Nature has*
set us, that we should not hunger, nor thirst, nor be cold: For our
Diet and Dress, says *Tully*, *should contribute to our Health and*
Strength, not to Luxury or Pleasure, [de Off. l. i. c. 13.] We
 may observe however farther, that, by the Patriarch's covenanting
 here with God only for *Food* and *Raiment*, does appear the gross
 Mistake of those, who pretend that he supplanted his Brother
 for covetous Ends, as if his Father's Estate, and the Possession
 of a rich Country for himself, and his Heirs, were the Things,
 which he had only in View. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and
Bibliotheca Bib. in Locum.

A. M. 2149, *Æc.* Ant. Christ 1855, *Æc.* From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxvii.

“ Acknowledgments, and offer unto him the † Tenth of whatever he should gain in the Land of *Mesopotamia*.”
 HAVING thus performed his Devotions, he || proceeded in his Journey, and, after some Weeks, arrived at *Haran*. As he came near the Town, he saw some Shepherds, with their Flocks, not far from a Well, which was covered with a large Stone; and, while he was enquiring of them concerning *Laban* and his Family, he was given to understand, that they were all well, and that it would not be long before his

His Arrival
at Haran,
and Inter-
view with
Rachel.

† This is the second Mention of *Tythes* or *Tenths*, and the first Dedication of them to God; and, from this Place, we may fairly conclude, that *Jacob*, the *Grand-Child* of *Abraham*, vowing the *Tenth* of all (as *Abraham* had given the *Tenth* of the *Speil*) was induced to do it by the Custom, which then prevailed among religious People. How they came to pitch upon this *Portion*, rather than a *fifth*, a *sixth*, or any other Quantity, is not so easy to be resolved; but they seem to speak with much Reason, who observe, that, in this Number *ten*, all Nations in a Manner do end their Account, and then begin again with *compound* Numbers, or (as others phrase it) that this is the End of *less* Numbers, and the Beginning of the *greater*, for which Reason it was looked on as the most perfect of all other, and accordingly had in great Regard: But, after all, it seems most likely, that they had some divine Precept and Direction for it. At this Time, 'tis certain, that the Order of Priesthood was not instituted; and therefore the only Purposes, to which *Jacob* could appropriate the *Tythes*, he gave, were, either for the Maintenance of Burnt-Sacrifices, and other pious Uses, or perhaps for the Relief of the Poor. But how, and when, he actually performed his Vow, does no where appear in Scripture, unless it was upon his Return from *Padan-Aran* [Gen. xxxv. 7, 14.] when he built an Altar at *El-Bethel*, and set up a Pillar in the Place, where God had talked with him, and poured a Drink-Offering, and Oil thereon. *Patrick's Commentary*.

|| The Words in the Text are, *And came into the Land of the People of the East*, Gen. xxix. 1. which makes some imagine, that he travelled *Eastward*: But this is a Mistake, because *Mesopotamia*, and particularly *Haran*, lay *Northward* from *Bethel*. *Babylon* however lay *Eastward* from both Places; and therefore, *Mesopotamia* being Part of the *Babylonish* Dominions, the *Babylonians* might well be called the *People of the East*, and *Jacob* is only said to have gone into a Country, of which they were Lords and Masters. *Bedford's Scripture Chronology*, l. 3. c. 4.

his Daughter † *Rachel* would be there with her Flock. A. M. 2149, &c.
 Nor had this Discourse long passed, before she came; where- Ant. Chris.
 upon *Jacob*, having very obligingly rolled away the Stone, 1855, &c.
 and watered her Sheep for her, took Occasion to let her From Gen.
 know who he was; and, as he proceeded to salute his Cousin, xxviii. 10.
 was, in a Manner, ready to weep for Joy; while she made ro Ch.
 what haste she cou'd home, in order to inform her Father, xxxvii.
 of what had passed. He immediately came to meet his
 Nephew, and received him with all the Kindness, and all
 the Tenderness imaginable, whilst he related to him † the
 Occasion of his leaving his Father's Family, and what Ad-
 ventures he had met with, in the Way.

JACOB

† *Rachel*, in the Hebrew Tongue, signifies a Sheep: Nor need we wonder at her being called so, since it was a common Thing, among the Antients, to give Names, not only to particular Persons, but even to considerable Families [as the Words *Porcius*, *Ovilius*, *Caprius*, *Equilius*, &c. mentioned by *Varro* de Re Rusticâ, l. 2. c. 1. sufficiently shews] from Cattle, both great and small. Much less Reason have we to wonder, that we find her keeping her Father's Sheep, since that Employment, in those early Days, was accounted very honourable, as from *Homer*, and other antient Writings, is sufficiently evident. We need not suppose however, that the whole Drudgery of the Work lay upon her; she had those under her, who took this off her Hands, and her Business was only, as the chief *Shepherdess*, to inspect over them. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† The Things, which *Jacob* inform'd his Uncle *Laban* of at this Time, may be supposed to be such, as related to the Occasion of his Journey; as, particularly, all that had passed between his Brother and him, as to the Right of *Primogeniture*; the *Purchase* which he had made of it, and what ensu'd; their two different Manners of living; the *Design* of his Father, with respect to them; the *Management* of the Mother, to procure him the Blessing; the *Resentment* of his Brother at his Disappointment; the prudent *Dismission* of himself thereupon, both by Father and Mother; the *Displeasure*, they had conceived at his Brother's matching himself into *strange* Families; and the *strict Orders*, they had therefore given him, to take a Wife out of his own Kindred, and of the House of his Mother's Father, which was the Reason of his coming thither; and, lastly, the wonderful Occurrences, he had met with on his Journey, more especially, as to the whole Affair of *Bethel*, and the happy meeting of his Daughter at the Well, to his great and surprising Satisfaction. *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii: 10.
to Ch.
xxxvii.

Marries
both her,
and her
Sifter Leah.

JACOB had not been long in his Uncle's House, before he applied himself to Business; and having now serv'd him, for the Space of a Month, in the Capacity of a Shepherd, his Uncle, one Day, took an Occasion to discourse him, and to let him know, that he neither expected, nor thought it reasonable, to have his Labour for nothing, and therefore desir'd him to name what Wages he wou'd have. The lovely Shepherdess had already captivated *Jacob's* Heart; and therefore he names her for the Reward † of his Seven-years Service, which her Father readily consented to, and he as readily enter'd upon, because the Love, which he had to his *Rachel*, made him account the longest Time short.

LABAN, we must know, had another Daughter, named *Leah*, older than *Rachel*, but not so beautiful, having some Blemish, or Soreness in her Eyes; and when the Time of *Jacob's* Servitude was expired, and he demanded his Wife, his Father-in-law seem'd to solemnize the Nuptials with great Magnificence, but, in the Evening, he put an unfair Trick upon him. For, instead of the beauteous *Rachel*, he † brought the blear-ey'd *Leah* to his Bed; which when *Jacob* perceived next Morning, and thereupon made just Remonstrances, the Father had his Answer ready, and, in a magisterial Tone, told him, " That it was an unprecedented
" Thing in that Country (and wou'd have been deem'd an
" Injury to her Sifter) to marry the Younger before the
" Elder; but, (continu'd he, in a milder Tone) if you will
" fulfil

† It was a Custom, which had prevailed almost in all Ages, that, in contracting Marriages, as the Wife brought a *Portion* to the Husband, so the Husband should be likewise obliged to give her, or her Parents, Money, or Presents, (which sometimes in Scripture are called the *Dowry*) in Lieu of this Portion: But *Jacob*, being destitute of Money, offers his Uncle seven Years Service, which must needs have been equivalent to a large Sum; and being so, it is more to be wondered at, that he did not send over to his Parents for a Supply upon this Occasion, rather than bind himself a Servant for so long a Term. But, from the Custom in use among us, there is no Judgment to be made what the Custom and Practice was then. *Bibliotheca Bibl. and Le Clerc's Commentary.*

† The Modesty of those Times made them bring the Bride to her Husband's Bed *veiled*, and without Lights, which gave *Laban* an Opportunity to impose upon *Jacob*, and made it a Thing almost impossible for him to discern the Deception, until next Morning. *Howell's History, and Patrick's Commentary.*

“ † fulfil the nuptial Week with your Wife, and consent to
 “ serve another seven Years for her Sister, I am content to
 “ take your Word for it, and to give *Rachel* to you, as
 “ soon as the seven Days are ended.” *Jacob* could not
 but be troubled at such unfair Procedure, but he loved
Rachel too well, not to obtain her at any Price; and there-
 fore he consented to these hard Conditions, and, at the
 Week's End, was married to *Rachel* likewise.

But, tho' he preferred *Rachel* much before *Leah*, yet
 God put quite another Difference between them, by making
 the latter the Mother of four Sons, *Reuben*, *Simeon*, *Levi*,
 and *Judah*, before her Sister had one. This was so great a
 Trouble to *Rachel*, that she came one Day, in a Fit of Me-
 lancholy, and told her Husband, that unless *he* gave her
 Children also, she should certainly die with Grief. Which
 Speech, seeming to lay the Blame of her Sterility upon him,
 so provoked him, that he sharply rebuked, and told her;
 “ That it was not in his Power to work Miracles; that
 “ God,

† Some are of Opinion, that *by her Week* (as it is in the Text)
 we are to understand, a *Week of Years*, or seven Years, and con-
 sequently, that to *fulfil her Week* was as much as to say, that
Jacob was to serve other seven Years for *Rachel*, before he was
 to marry her. Some old *English* Versions render it thus: But
 the Order of the Story seems to gainsay it. For, tho' *Jacob*
 liv'd with *Laban* twenty Years, it is plain, that, at the End of
 the fourteenth Year, he proposed to part, and return home, and
 yet we may observe, that *Rachel* (tho' she had been a good while
 barren) had borne *Joseph* before that Time, which could not have
 been, had not she been married before the End of his *second*
seven Years Service. Since *Laban* then (as we read *Gen.* xxix.
 22.) had invited a great deal of Company, and the Custom, in
 those Days, was, to devote a whole Week to the nuptial Solem-
 nities, the plain Sense of his Words to *Jacob* (according to *Sel-*
den's short Comment on them, *de Jure Nat.* l. 5. c. 5.) is this,
 “ ——— Since Marriages are to be celebrated, according to
 “ Custom, by a seven Days Feast; complete this Marriage,
 “ thou hast begun with *Leah*, and then, upon Condition of
 “ another seven Years Service, thou shalt marry *Rachel* also,
 “ and keep her Wedding-Feast seven Days.” And the Reason
 why *Laban* was so desirous of this, was, that a Week's Cohabi-
 tation with *Leah* might be a Means, either to knit *Jacob's* Af-
 fection to her, or, at least, to confirm the Marriage so, that it
 should not be in his Power to disannul it. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's*
Commentaries, *Howell's* History, and *Pool's* Annotations.

A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chris. 1855, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxvii.  “ God, who had shut up her Womb, was alone able to open it; but that such uneasy and discontented Behaviour was the Way to prevent, rather than obtain, such a Favour.” This mortifying Answer made her bethink herself of supplying the Defect of Nature, by her Grandmother *Sarah*’s Expedient, and therefore she desir’d her Husband to take her Handmaid *Bilhah* for a concubinary Wife, and by that Means to try to make her a Mother; which he consenting to, had by her a Son, whom *Rachel* named *Dan*, and, in a proper Space of Time, another, whom she called *Naphtali*. After which *Leah*, supposing herself to have left off Child-bearing, and willing to imitate her Sister’s Policy, gave her Maid *Zilpah* to her Husband, by whom she had likewise two Sons, *Gad* and *Ashur*.

ABOUT this Time it so fell out, that *Reuben*, *Jacob*’s eldest Son, going into the Fields, about the Time of Wheat-harvest, chanced to meet with some *Mandrakes*, which he gathered, and carried to his Mother, *Leah*. *Rachel* no sooner saw them, but desiring to have some of them, receiv’d from *Leah* a forbidding Answer; “ That having robbed her of her Husband’s Affections, she could not expect to have any Part in her Son’s Present.” It was † *Rachel*’s Turn that Night to have her Husband’s Company; and therefore, to compromise the Matter, she tells her Sister, that in case she would oblige her with some of her Son’s *Mandrakes*, she would wave her Pretensions, and consign the Right of his Bed to her. Upon *Jacob*’s coming home, *Leah* calls upon him to confirm the Bargain, which accordingly he did, and the Consequence was, that she conceived again, and had a fifth Son, whom she called *Issachar*; after him another, named *Zebulun*; and last of all, a Daughter, whose Name was *Dinah*, the Feminine of *Dan*.

RACHEL had hitherto no Issue of her own Body; but now it pleased God to remember her, and to bless her with a Son, whom she called † *Joseph*: And, it was not long

† The Custom of those Countries, where *Polygamy* was allowed, was for the Husband to take his Wives by Turns. The Kings of *Persia* (if we believe *Herodotus*) were not exempt from that Rule; which makes it more probable, that *Rachel* sold her Turn to her Sister for that Night, than that she directed her Husband, which of the four he should lie with. Universal History, l. 1. c. 7.

† *Joseph* signifies *Increase*; and the Reason, why *Rachel* named him so, is said to be, because God had taken away her Reproach; for

long after his Birth, that his Father *Jacob*, having now served out his last seven Years, began to entertain Thoughts of returning into his own Country, and accordingly desired of his Uncle to dismiss him and his Family. But *Laban*, who had found, by Experience, no small Advantage by having such a Servant, begged him to stay with him a little longer; and promised him, upon that Condition, to give him whatever Wages, he should think fit to name. Hereupon *Jacob* took an Occasion of reminding him, how much his Substance had increased, since it was put under his Care, but that it was now high Time for him to make some Provision for his own Family; and that therefore he was resolv'd to return to *Canaan*, unless he could shew him some Way of improving his Fortune in *Mesopotamia*. *Laban* could not bear the Thoughts of parting; and therefore he press'd him to stay, and offer'd him his own Terms, which at last were resolv'd into this Agreement, — That, in the whole Flock both of Sheep and Goats, a Separation should be made between the speckled and the white; that the spotted Cattle should be given to *Laban's* Sons to keep, and that *Jacob* should have the Care of the *White*; and that whatever † spotted or brown Sheep or Goats should, from that Time forward, be produced out of the white Flock (which he was to keep) should be accounted his Hire. *Laban* was very well satisfy'd with these Conditions. Accordingly, the Flocks were parted; the spotted Cattle were deliver'd to *Laban's* Sons; the Remainder, that were white, were given to *Jacob*; and, that there might be no Possibility of intermixing, they were sent three Days Journey apart.

WHETHER

for to be barren was formerly reckoned a Disgrace, for these three Reasons: 1. Because Fruitfulness proceeded from the Blessing of God, who said, *increase and multiply*; 2. Because barren People seem to be excluded from the Promises of God, made to *Abraham*, concerning the vast Multiplication of his Seed; and, 3. Because the *Messias* could not proceed from them. *Pool's* Annotations.

† The sacred Historian makes use of four different Words, to denote the Cattle, which shou'd properly belong to *Jacob*: The first is *nakod*, which we translate *speckled*; for the Word signifies little Points, or Pricks, which the Greeks call *στίγματα*. The second is *talū*, which signifies such broader and larger Spots, as we frequently see in Cattle. The next is *akod*, which signifies spotted with divers Colours, or rather with Rings, or Circles about the Feet or Legs; and the last is *barud*, which signifies whitish Spots, like *Hail*; which seems to take in all the Kinds of Variegation. *Patrick's* Commentary.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

WHETHER it was from his own Observation of the Power of Fancy, in the Time of Conception, or (what seems more likely) from some private Suggestion of the divine Wisdom, that the Project proceeded; but so it was, that, by *Jacob's* taking Twigs of green Wood, peeling off the Rinds in Slips, and so laying them in the watering Places, when the Flocks came to drink † about coupling-time, these speckled Twigs struck the Eyes of the Females, and so made them conceive and bring forth party-colour'd young ones. But it was not to all the Flock that *Jacob* did this, only to such, as were the ablest and strongest; for those, that were weak and languid, he left to their natural Course, that his Artifice might be the less suspected, when it appear'd that the Number of his Father-in-law's Cattle was not too much diminished.

He returns to
Canaan.

His Father-in-law however, envying his Prosperity, repented of his Bargain, and several Times alter'd the Agreement, which God, as many Times, turned to *Jacob's* Advantage; till at length, observing in his Carriage a Coldness and Indifference, and over-hearing, at a certain Time, his Sons grudging and complaining, that he had raised himself an Estate out of their Fortunes, he began to form a Resolution of retiring into his own Country, with his Family and Effects, which God in a Vision confirm'd him in; but, before he put it in Execution, he thought it proper to advise with his two principal Wives, and to endeavour to gain their Consent. To this Purpose he sent for them into the Field, that he might have an Opportunity of discoursing the Matter with more Freedom and Privacy; and then told them, that, for some Time, he had observ'd, that their Father's Carriage had been alter'd, but for what Reason he could not devise: He appealed to them concerning his Fidelity and Diligence, and their Father's unworthy Requit of him;

† Several *antient* Commentators are of Opinion, that *Jacob* laid these streaked Rods before the Cattle, only in Spring-Time, when the Sun was ascending, and the Cattle lusty and vigorous, but let them alone, when the Cattle came to couple in *September*, or the Decline of the Year: But as there is no Certainty in this, our *Moderns* have thought it more reasonable to suppose, that he laid the Rods only before the young and lusty Sheep and Goats, but left the old and weak to take their Chance, by which Means the best Lambs and Kids came to his Share, and the worst to *Laban's*. Universal History, l. 1. c. 7. and *Patrick's* Commentary.

him; reminded them of God's Goodness in defeating his || A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chris. 1855, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxvii.
 Contrivances against him, and converting them to his great Advantage and Increase; acquainted them, that the same God, who had thus blessed him, had appeared to him (as he did at *Bethel*, in his Passage from *Canaan* thither) and commanded him to return to his native Country, which Command he was resolv'd to obey. They heard him with a willing Mind, declar'd their Opinion concerning their Father, in the same Manner, as he had done, and profess'd themselves ready to attend him, when he pleas'd to set out. *Jacob* therefore preparing all Things for the Journey, mounting his Wives and Children upon Camels, and taking the Advantage of his Father-in-law's Absence (which gave *Rachel* an Opportunity likewise of stealing away his *Gods*) himself went along with the Cattle, and all the other Substance, which he had acquir'd at *Haran*: He had now pass'd † the *Euphrates*, and gain'd † the Mountains of *Gilead*, (as they

K 2

were

|| In the Complaint, which *Jacob* makes to his Wives, there is one particular Article against their Father, *viz.* that he *had changed his Wages ten Times*, Gen. xxxi. 7. and yet he lived in Contract with him only six Years. But to solve this Difficulty, we are to observe, that the Cattle in *Mesopotamia* bred twice every Year; and therefore supposing that, for the first Year, *Laban* stood to his Bargain, but seeing his Son-in-law thrive exceedingly, alter'd the Form of it the *next*, and so continued to do every half Year, till the sixth Year came about, when *Jacob* thought proper to leave him; the several Times, wherein he *changed his Wages*, will be exactly ten; though there is no Necessity for this exact Calculation, when it is so common a Figure of Speech, to put a *certain* for an *uncertain* Number. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentary.

† Tho' the Text does not say what River he pass'd, yet it is plain, it could be no other, than the *Euphrates*, which the Scripture sometimes calls the River *Perah*, sometimes the *great River*, and sometimes emphatically *the River*; either because *that*, and the *Nile*, were the only two considerable ones, the *Israelites* knew; or because it was one of the four Rivers of *Paradise*; or, lastly, because it was the Boundary of the *Promised Land*. Universal History l. 1. c. 7.

† The Heap of Stones, which *Laban* and *Jacob* rais'd in Memory of their Agreement and Covenant, was called *Gilead*, i. e. *an Heap of Witnesses*; and in After-Ages, gave the Name to the whole Country thereabout, which lies on the *East* of the Sea of *Galilee*, being Part of that Ridge of Mountains, which ran from Mount

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

*Is overtaken
by his Fa-
ther-in-law,
and expostu-
lates with
him.*

were afterwards called) before *Laban* had Intelligence of his Flight, and was able to overtake him. *Laban*, no doubt, at his first setting out after *Jacob*, pursu'd him with a Mind whetted with Revenge; but God, who appeared to him that Night in a Dream, was pleas'd to avert it, by threatening him severely, if he committed any Hostility or Violence against him: So that, the next Morning, when he, and the Relations he had with him, came to speak with *Jacob*, he only expostulated with him, that he had stolen away, without giving him an Opportunity to take his Leave of his Children, and Grandchildren, or to send them home with an Equipage suitable to their Rank, or with the usual Ceremonies of Musick and Dancing. *Jacob*, on the other Hand, was not without his Complaints. The Cheat, which *Laban* had put upon him, in making him serve so long for a Woman he did not love; the changing his Salary so many Times, and his late strange Behaviour towards him and his Family; all these, and many more, *he answer'd him*, were but ill Requitals for his Care and Diligence, as well as the Blessings, which God had heaped upon him for his Sake. *Laban* had yet another Thing to lay to his Charge, namely, the stealing of his *Gods*: But *Jacob*, (who knew nothing of *Rachel's* Theft) desir'd him to make the most diligent Search for them throughout his Family; assuring him withal, that the Person, on whom they were found, should immediately be put to Death. Hereupon *Laban* went; and searched every Place; but, as he enter'd into *Rachel's* Tent; (who had hid them under the Camel's Furniture, and set herself down upon them) she kept her sitting, and alledged in Excuse, That the Condition, she was in, allow'd her Sex to be excus'd from the usual Ceremonies. *Laban* not suspecting the Fallacy, which his Daughter had put upon him, in Point of Modesty, desisted from any farther Search, and so went and acquainted his Son-in-law with his bad Success; whereupon *Jacob*, appealing to his very Friends, sharply upbraided him with his unjust Suspicion; and then, recounting the long Servitude he had held him in, and the many Hardships he had made him undergo both Day and Night, together with the cruel and unequal Terms he had all along put upon him, he concluded with these Words, *Except the God of my Father had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away empty.*

THIS

Mount *Lebanon* Southward on the East of the *Holy Land*, and included the mountainous Region, called in the *New Testament*, *Trachonitis*. *Wells's Geography*. Vol. I. Ch. 13.

THIS Charge of *Jacob's* was so just; that *Laban* could make no Defence for himself; and therefore he thought it best to let fall the Debate, and to enter upon a more agreeable Subject, which was to make an Alliance between them, and to erect a † Monument as a standing Witness of it to all future Ages. At the same Time they took mutual Oaths, that neither of them should, at any Time, invade the other, and *Jacob* in particular, that he would use his Wives and Children with all becoming Tenderneſs and Affection.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
18:5, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. ſo
Ch. xxxvii.

WHEN this Ceremony was over, and a Sacrifice, in Confirmation of it, offer'd, *Jacob* feasted the whole Company for the rest of the Day; and, in the Morning, *Laban*, having embraced, and blessed the whole Family, return'd home to *Padan-Aram*.

JACOB had no sooner parted with his Father-in-law, but the Remembrance of his Brother's antient Grudge against him began to give him fresh uneasiness; but the Vision of a great † Number of Angels, (sent from Heaven to

K 3

protect

† This Monument *Jacob* seems to have erected after the same Manner, as he did that at *Bethel*. It must not be supposed to have been a Heap of loose Stones; for then it could not have continued long in the same Position, nor given a Name to the Country around it. It was doubtless a regular and permanent Building; but then, what the Form and Figure of it was, it is not so easy to determine. Had it been only for a Memorial to Posterity, and not for some present Transaction also, the Figure either of a Column, or Pyramid, would have been very proper: But we find, that the present Use of it was, to eat and sacrifice upon, and therefore we may imagine, that it was made in the Figure of a Table, and have some Authority to think of a round Table, because the Name, which *Jacob* calls it by, is taken from a Verb, which signifies to turn round, as the Word *Gilal* is properly the Circumference of a Circle. *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

† *Interpreters* are generally of Opinion, that these were two Hosts, or Armies of Angels, whereof one was that of the guardian Angel of *Mesopotamia*, who, with his Company, conducted *Jacob* safely to the Confines of *Canaan*, where the guardian Angel of *Canaan*, with his Company, received him into their Care; and this is inferred from the Necessity of such Protection, by *Jacob's* being exposed to the Treachery of *Laban*, and the Cruelty of *Eſau*, which made Providence more particularly careful of him, to whom the Promises were made. But it is sufficient to the Purpose of giving the Patriarch Comfort and Encouragement under his uneasy Apprehensions, that, besides his own Family (which was pitched here in Order, like a Camp) a certain Num-

ber

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

protect him) which he had in his Way to *Canaan* (at a Place, which he therefore call'd † *Mahanaim*, i. e. *two Camps*, viz. one of Angels, and the other of his own Retinue) did dissipate his Anxiety for a while. As he approach'd to his Brother's Country however, his Fears and Uneasiness return'd upon him: And therefore he thought it adviseable, before he advanc'd any farther, to send him a *submissive* Message, in order to discover, at least, how he stood affected to him. *Esau*, when *Jacob* was gone to *Haran*, understanding how strictly his Father had charged his Brother not to marry a *Canaanitish* Woman, began to be dissatisfied with his own Marriages; and therefore went to *Ishmael*, and, having married one of his Daughters, settled in Mount † *Seir*, in the Land of *Edom*. Hither it was that *Jacob* sent some of his † chief Servants, with Instructions to acquaint his

ber of Angels were represented to him, as drawn up like another Army, ready and prepared for his Defence. *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries.

† This Place was situated between Mount *Gilead*, and the River *Jabbok*, not far from the Banks of the latter, and very near the Confines of *Gad*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*, which was on the East of *Jordan*. It became in Time a City of great Strength, and for this Reason, was made Choice of by *Abner* for the Seat-Royal of *Ishbosheth*, the Son of *Saul*, when he made War against *David*, and for a retiring Place by *David* himself, during the Rebellion of his Son *Absalom*. *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. I. c. 13.

† The Mountains of *Seir* lay on the *East* and *South* of the *Dead-Sea*, and the Country extended itself from thence to the *Arabian Gulf*. 'Tis certain from Gen. xxxvi. 21, 22. that, in *Abraham's* Days, the *Horites*, who were the Descendants of *Seir*, had the Possession of this Region; and therefore we may suppose, that, after the Departure of *Jacob*, *Esau*, who (according to the Prediction concerning him) was to *live by his Sword*, expell'd the old Inhabitants, and made himself Prince thereof, before his Brother returned from *Mesopotamia*. From Gen. xxxii. 13. xxxiii. 4. xxxvi. 8, 9. and Deut. ii. 12. we may learn, that *Esau* made War with these People with great Success, tho' we have of it no Particulars in the Writings of *Moses*. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Seir*.

† Several Commentators have taken Notice of *Jacob's* great Wisdom and Prudence, in the Order and Disposition of this his Embassy to his Brother. He sent his *Servants*, and not his *Sons*, tho' that would have been doing him a great deal more Honour ;
but

his Brother, that, after a Stay of twenty Years in *Mesopotamia*, and the Acquisition of all Manner of Wealth there, he was now upon his Return to his *native* Country; but that he could not pass over *Jordan*, without notifying his Arrival to him, and imploring his Favour and Friendship.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

THE Messengers went, and soon return'd again, but with this melancholy News, that his Brother was coming to meet him at the Head of four hundred Men; which made him to conclude, that this must be with an hostile Intent, and in order to destroy both him, and all that belong'd to him. In this Situation what could he do? To fight, he was not able, and to fly, his Retinue was too cumbersome. At length he came to this Resolution, to divide his Company into two Bands, that, if *Esau* should fall upon one, he might have a Possibility of escaping with the other: And, having done this, he address'd himself to God in a very humble and submissive Prayer; acknowledging "his great Mercies to him, and his own Unworthiness of them; imploring "his future Protection against his Brother's Sword; and "that he wou'd be so gracious, as to fulfil all his former "Promises to him."

JACOB had acquainted his Brother, how God had enriched him: That therefore his first Message might not look like an empty Piece of Formality, he order'd a Present of the choice of his Flocks and Herds to be sent before, in several Drove, and charged the Drivers, that, whenever they met his Brother, they should tell him, that they were Presents sent by *Jacob* to his Lord *Esau*, in hopes of obtaining his Favour and Good-will; and, after this, he sent his Wives, and Children, and all his Substance, over the

K 4

Brook

but then it would have been running too great a Risk. In the Present, which he sent, he put a Space between Drove and Drove, that the more Time was taken up in their passing by *Esau*, his Passion might still grow cooler and cooler; that the Present itself might make so much the greater Appearance; and that, if the Drove, which went first, were not well accepted by him, those, who came later, might be at Distance enough, to hasten back to their Master, and give him Intelligence of what he was to expect. In the Form of Address, he ordered them all to make use of the same Words, 1st, that the Repetition of them might strike the deeper, and make the stronger Impression upon *Esau*; 2dly, That they might not spoil the Compliment, or not speak so properly, if left to their own Expression; and, 3dly, That *Esau* might know, by the very Turn and Elegancy of them, that the Words of the

Message

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

Wrestles
with an
Angel.

Brook † *Jabbok*, early next Morning, before it was Day, whilst himself, all alone, † tarried behind for some Time. And here it was, that an Angel, in the Shape of a Man, appear'd to him, and began to *wrestle* with him. The Contest was certainly unequal; but so it was, that the Angel did not overcome him; but, to shew how easily he might have done it, at one Touch he put his Thigh out of Joint. He then told him the *symbolical* Intent of his *wrestling* with him; and, after he had blessed him, gave him † the additional Name of *Israel*, which signifies, *a Man that has prevailed with God*: And this occasioned *Jacob* to call the Place, where this Transaction happen'd, *Peniel*, or the *Face of God*, because he concluded that it was God, or some of his Angels, who had had this Conflict with him.

As

Message came from *Jacob. Musculus, Ainsworth, Patrick, &c.* The Appellation, he gives his Brother of being his *Lord*, and himself his *Servant*, we shall take notice of hereafter.

† This is a small River, which is by all agreed to flow from the adjacent Mountains of *Gilead*; but some make it to run into the *Sea of Galilee*, others into the River *Jordan*, below, or South of that Sea. *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. I. c. 1.

† Tho' the Reason, which made the Patriarch, after he had forded the River to try if it was passable for his Family, return back again, and not go along with them, be not express'd by *Moses*; yet it is very natural to suppose, that he stay'd sometime behind his Family in this Place of Vision, which he afterwards call'd *Peniel*, to recommend himself, and them in Prayer, (as the Danger approach'd nearer and nearer) to the Protection of Almighty God. *Musc. Patrick, and Bibliotheca Bib.*

† The Words in the Text, according to our Translation, are, — *Thy Name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel*; and yet it is certain, that this Patriarch was very frequently, nay, in the very next Verse but one, is called *Jacob*, and therefore this seeming Contradiction may be amended, by rendering the Words, instead of *no more, not only*; or, *not so much Jacob, as Israel*; because it is certain, that, in his Posterity at least (who were called *Israelites*, but never *Jacobites*) the latter Name abolish'd the former. *Israel* is certainly derived from the Word *Sar*, which (as *St Jerom* observes) signifies a *Prince*, with the *Jod*, which is the common Note of a proper Name; but then there is some Obscurity in our Translation, as to the latter Part of the Verse, *as a Prince hast thou Power with God, and with Men, and hast prevailed*; which should rather be translated, *Thou hast been a Prevailer with God, and with Men thou shalt also powerfully prevail*. This is the literal Version of the Words; is consonant to the vulgar Latin, *Onkelos*, and the *Septuagint*; and very justly expresses the

trug

As soon as the Angel was gone, *Jacob*, tho' lame, made what haste he cou'd to join his Company; and it was not long, before he saw his Brother afar off, coming towards him with a large Retinue, which made him betray some fresh Tokens of Distrust: And therefore, to prepare for the worst, he divided his Family into three Companies, and placed them at equal Distances; the two *Maids*, and their Sons, went first; *Leah* and her Children next; and *Rachel* and *Joseph*, (who was then about six Years old) as farthest from Danger, were the last; whilst himself marched in the Front of all, and, as he approach'd his Brother, bowed himself to the Ground *seven Times*.

WHATEVER Apprehensions *Jacob* might conceive of *Esau's* Resentments, he had the Happiness to meet him in a much better Temper than he expected. At first Sight, he ran to meet him; he embraced him with the greatest Tenderneſs; he wept over him with Tears of Joy; and, ſeeing his Wives and Children prostrate themselves before him one after another, and in the ſame Order, wherein *Jacob* had diſpoſed them, he returned their Civilities with the ſame Tenderneſs, that he had his Brother's. The Preſents indeed, which *Jacob* had ſent him, he kindly acknow- ledg'd, but deſir'd to be excus'd from accepting of them, becauſe they were *ſuperfluous* to him, who had enough of every Thing; but *Jacob* preſſed him ſo earneſtly, that at length he prevailed: And therefore to make him a Re- compence, *Esau* invited him to *Seir*, and proffer'd his Ser- vice to accompany and conduct him thither. *Jacob* how- ever had no Deſign to accept of the Invitation, and yet was afraid directly to reſuſe it. And therefore he repreſented the Tenderneſs of his Children and Flocks, and that they cou'd not travel with Expedition. He begged that they might not confine him to their ſlow Movements, but that he wou'd return home his own Pace; and promis'd withal, that they wou'd follow as faſt as they cou'd conveniently. *Esau* then offer'd to leave him a ſufficient Number of his Men, that might guard and conduct them into his Terri- tories; but this Compliment likewise *Jacob*, in an hand- ſome Manner, evaded, and ſo they † parted; *Esau* went to

true Senſe of the Place: *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. lib. vii. cap. 7.

† After this, *Moses* gives us no farther Account of *Esau*, and his Family, only that he was aſſiſting at his Father's Funeral, and

A. M. 2149, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

to *Seir*, and expected his Brother to follow him; but his Brother turned another Way, and, by easy Journeys, came to



and had *three* Wives, whereof it is proper to take Notice, that, when he barely mentions these Wives [as in *Gen.* xxvi. 34. and *Gen.* xxviii. 9.] he gives them quite other Names than what he does, when he comes to speak of the Posterity, which *Esau* had by them, Chap. xxxvi; which may lead an unwary Reader to think, that he had more than three, especially when the Fathers of the two first are likewise called by different Names. Thus his first Wife *Judith*, the Daughter of *Beer*, is afterwards called *Adah*, the Daughter of *Elon* the *Hittite*; the Second, viz. *Bathsheba*, the Daughter of *Elon*, is again called *Aboli Bamah*, the Daughter of *Ana*, the Daughter of *Zibeon*, the *Hivite*; and the last, called in one Place *Mahalab*, is now called *Bathshebah*; but what shews, that these two latter Names mean the same Person, and that the same Thing may be supposed of the other two, is, that, in both Places, she is called the Daughter of *Ismael*, the Sister of *Nabajoth*. All the Account that can therefore be given of this Difference, is, that they had *two* Names, and that it was usual to call them, sometimes by one, and sometimes by another; in the like Manner, as we find the Mother of *Abijam*, King of *Judah*, in one Place called *Maacab*, the Daughter of *Abishalon*, [1 Kings xv. 2.] and in another, *Michaiab*, the Daughter of *Uriel* of *Gibeab*, [2 Chron. xiii. 2.] with many more Instances of the like Nature. After having taken this Notice of *Esau's* Wives, *Moses* enumerates his Children, and some of their Descendants, the Princes of the Tribes of the *Edomites*; the Kings that succeeded them; and the *Chiefs*, who governed after the Kings; but as to the Order of Succession, wherein they are to be placed, there is some Dispute among the Learned. One Remark more, that we shall make, before we part with *Esau*, is, that, all Things considered, he was not that very bad Man, which some would make him. His generous and open Temper appears in his affectionate Deportment towards his Brother, and his speedy and utter Oblivion of the Slights, and Perfidies, he had receiv'd from him; and tho' St. *Paul* calls him a *prophane Person*, and says, that he was *bated by God*; yet all that he means by the Word *Hatred*, is no more than a bare *postponing*. For the *Apostle's* Purpose is to shew, that God had, all along, bestow'd the Favours which lead to the *Messiah*, on whom he pleas'd; on *Abraham*, not on *Lot*; on *Jacob*, not on *Esau*; on the *Gentiles*, not on the *Jews*: And he therefore calls him *prophane*, not because he was more wicked than other Men of his Age, but because he seems not

to Succoth (which in *Hebrew* signifies *Booths*) and there intending to settle for some Time, he built an House for his Family, and proper Conveniences for the Reception of his Cattle. But in a short Time he removed from hence, and || safely arriv'd at *Shechem*, where having purchased a Piece of Ground of *Hamor*, the Father of *Shechem*, for an hundred † Pieces of Money, he pitched his Tents in the Place,

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

to have been so mindful of the Promises, made to his Family, as *Jacob* was, and consequently was not so fit to be the Heir of the Mercies peculiar to it. Universal History, l. i. c. 4. and *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. c. 7.

|| The Words in our Translation are, that *Jacob* came to *Shalem*, a City of *Shechem*: But, besides that there was no such Place as *Shalem*, in the Confines of *Shechem*, (which seems itself, at this Time, to have been but a small Town, without any dependant Villages) since the Word *Shalem* is so frequently taken *adjectively*, to denote any Thing *safe and sound*, as we call it, and as *Onkeles*, and some of the best *Jewish* Interpreters, have it; it may very properly be render'd so here. And this *Soundness*, as some imagine, may have Reference to *Jacob's* Halting, which was perfectly cur'd before he reach'd *Shechem*; as his *Safety* has Respect, either to his having escap'd all Danger, at his Interview with his Brother, or, rather, to his having met with no evil Accident of any Sort, since he left *Laban*: And this Observation *Moses* might the rather be induced to make, because he was just going to relate a sad Disaster, that, not long after his Arrival at *Shechem*, befel his Family. *Shechem* (by the bye) otherwise called *Sichar*, was a City of *Samaria*, situate among the Mountains belonging to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, ten Miles from *Shiloh*, forty from *Jerusalem*, and fifty-two from *Jericho*, near which was *Jacob's* Well, or Fountain, where our blessed Saviour enter'd into Conversation with the *Samaritan* Woman, *John* iv. 7. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentary. *Calmet's* Dictionary, and *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament.

† The Word *Kesitah*, which is here rendered a Piece of Money, signifies likewise a *Lamb*, from whence the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Oleaster*, and others, have translated it an hundred Lambs: But since, long before this, Money was in Use, and made the Instrument of Traffick, [*Gen.* xxiii. 16.] which must, of Course, destroy the Method of exchanging one Commodity for another, it is much more probable, that it was some Sort of Coin (tho' of what Value it is uncertain) which had a Lamb stamped upon it, and was called by that Name, as we do call an *Angel*, from the Stamp it bears of one. Universal History, l. i. c. 7. and *Patrick's* Commentary in Locum.

A. M. Place, and there built an Altar to the Lord, whom he called *El Elobe-Israel*, or *the Mighty God of Israel*.

2149, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1855, &c. HERE *Jacob* might have liv'd peaceably and happily, being beloved by all the People, had not * *Dinah's* Curiosity of vifiting the Women of the City prov'd the Cause of much Mifchief, and oblig'd her Father to withdraw:

From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxvii. *Shechem*, the Son of *Hamor* the *Hivite*, who was Prince of that Country, faw her, fell in love with her, and having gain'd a fecure Opportunity, ravish'd her. But notwithstanding this difhonourable Act, his Soul was fo enamour'd with her Charms, that he defir'd nothing more earneftly, than to marry her; and to this Purpose, prevail'd with his Father to enter upon a Treaty with her Friends. *Jacob* foon heard of the Rape committed upon his Daughter, but concealed the Matter until his Sons were come home; and when he had made them acquainted with it, their Reſentment grew to fuch an Height, that they vowed feverely to revenge the Difhonour done unto their Family. In the mean Time, *Shechem* having prevail'd with his Father to obtain him the Damsel, they both went together to make the Propofal to her Father; promifing to give her as large a * *Dowry*, and her *Relations* as coftly Presents, as he

Dinah's
Rape and
her Brothers
Cruelty.

* At what Time this Misfortune happen'd to *Dinah*, the Scripture gives us no Account: It is prefum'd however, from the bold Exploit of her two Brothers to avenge her Difhonour, (which implies that they were Men grown) that ſhe could not be lefs than fifteen or ſixteen Years of Age; and the Occaſion of her running herſelf into this Premunire, *Joſephus* tells us, was a great *Feflival*, then held at *Shechem*, which ſhe, deſirous to ſee the fine Sights, and Faſhions of the Place, adventur'd to go to. Antiq. l. 1. c. 21.

* This ſhews more fully, that the Cuſtom of thoſe Times was (as we noted before) for Men to give Money for their Wives, and to give it generally to their Parents. The Money, or Presents ſo given, were by the *Greeks* called *ἔδνα*; for ſo we find *Vulcan*, when he had caught his Wife *Venus* in an Act of Incontinency, telling her, and her *Paramour*, that he would not let them go.

Ἔεισε μοι μάλα πάλαι ματὴρ ἀποδώσει ἔδνα,

Ὅσσά ῥ' ἐγγυάλιξα κυνῶπιδ' εἵνεκα κάρης. HOM. Odyſſ. 8.

But there was a greater Reaſon for a *Dowry* now, and a large one too, that he might make Compensafion for the Wrong he had done. There is to be obſerv'd however, a *natural Equity* in

he should desire; and alledging withal, that if his Family were to intermarry with the *Shechemites*, it would prove the most effectual Means to make them both live together in perfect Harmony and Friendship. This was a fair Offer; but the treacherous Sons of *Jacob*, who meditated nothing but the most bloody Revéngé, made them this Reply: "That it was not lawful for them to contract an Affinity with any *uncircumcised* Nation, but that, if he, and his People wou'd consent to be circumcised, as they were, they would then come into his Proposal."

HAMOR and *Shechem* agreed very readily to this Condition; and, when they returned to the City, and had convened the Inhabitants, "They commended the *Israelites* highly for a peaceable and good-natur'd People, from whom they might reap many great Advantages, and, in Process of Time, make all their Substance (which was very considerable) their own, if they were to intermarry with them; but that this would not be done without a general Consent to be circumcised." How averse soever the People might be to such an Operation at first, yet the *Thirst of Gain*, joined with the powerful Interest, which *Shechem* had among them, soon won their Consent, inasmuch, that, on that very Day, every Male of them was circumcised. But, * three Days after this, when their Wounds had made them incapable of making any Resistance, *Simeon* and *Levi* entered the City, and, having put all the Men to the Sword, made Search in *Shechem's* House, where they found their Sister *Dinah*, and brought her away. After which, they re-entered the Town, plunder'd the Houses, took both Women and Children Captives, and carried away all the Cattle that they found in the neighbouring Places.

JACOB

in the subsequent Laws of *Moses* (Exod. xxii. 16. and Deut. xxii. 28.) by which a Man was bound to make Satisfaction to the Father, if, either by Inticement, or Violence, he had abused his Daughter. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentary.

* The third Day, as *Physicians* take Notice, was the Time, when Fevers generally attended *Circumcision*, occasion'd by the Inflammation of the Wound, which was generally more painful than (as the *Hebrews* observe) than at any Time else; and for this Reason, the Sons of *Jacob* took the Opportunity of falling upon the *Shechemites*, when they were least of all in a Condition to defend themselves. *Hewel's* History.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

Jacob's Re-
moval to Be-
thel.

JACOB was much concern'd at the furious Proceed-ings of his Sons, for which he juſtly reprov'd them. He was apprehenſive indeed, that the Inhabitants of the Land would unite againſt him, and deſtroy his Family, for this violent Outrage: But *Simeon* and *Levi*, who were the chief Actors in the Tragedy, were ſo warm'd with the Thoughts of the Diſhonour done to their Siſter and Family, that they did not think they had carried their Reſentment, in the leaſt, too far for ſo baſe an Injury. *Jacob* however thought it adviſeable, for his own Security, to tarry no longer there, but to ſhift into ſome other Part of the Country. And accordingly, having received particular Directions from God to remove to *Bethel*, and there to build an Altar, (whereon to perform the Vow, which he made, when he fled from his Brother *Eſau*) he ſet his Reſolution to go thither: But, before he did that, being willing to carry nothing, that might be offenſive to God, to ſo ſacred a Place, he found it neceſſary to make a Reformation in his Family. To this Purpoſe he commanded all that propoſed to go along with him, to bring out their *Idols*; which they not only did, but gave up their * *Ear-rings* likewiſe, which they were uſed

* It was a Cuſtom, in ſeveral Countries, for the Men as well as the Women, and for the meaner as well as the better Sort, to wear Ear-rings; and therefore we find *Plautus* in his Play, called *Pœnulum*, Act 5. taking this Notice of ſome *Carthaginian Slaves* ———— *That their Hands ſhould be without Fingers, one would think, becauſe they wore their Rings in their Ears.* But, beſides the Rings deſign'd for Ornament, it was a common Thing for idolatrous Nations to wear others for ſuperſtitious Uſes. Theſe (as ſome ſay) were made in Form of a *Semicircle*, and reach'd over the Forehead from Ear to Ear. They had aſtronomical Characters and Signatures engraven upon them, and to them they imputed a thouſand ſupernatural Virtues. They were always dedicated to ſome falſe Deity; and therefore *St. Auſtin*, in ſeveral Places, exerts himſelf, with a becoming Zeal, againſt ſuch impious Fooleries, and tells his Countrymen, the *Africans*, (among whom this Cuſtom had got ſome Footing) that in this execrable Superſtition, as he calls it, they did not deſign to dreſs themſelves out to pleaſe Men, ſo much as to ſerve and pleaſe Devils. And therefore *Jacob* was highly to be commended for deſtroying theſe Relicks of Idolatry, which his Haſte to be gone, both according to God's Command, and his own Apprehenſions of Danger, made him bury under Ground, rather than ſtay to melt them down.

used to wear, as Spells or Amulets against Sickness, and other Misfortunes. These he took, and buried privately in a deep Hole, which he caused to be dug under an Oak near *Shechem*, and so having purified * themselves, even to the washing and changing of their Garments, they set forward to *Bethel*, and arrived there safe, and without any Disturbance, because God had struck such a Terror into the Cities round about them, that, notwithstanding the late Provocation in the Matter of *Shechem*, No-body offered to molest or pursue them.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10, to
Ch. xxxvii.

As

Le Clerc's and *Patrick's* Commentary. *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 13. and *Calmet's* Dictionary under the Word *Rings*.

* The Manner, wherein *Jacob* requir'd of his Domesticks to purify themselves, was, by washing their whole Bodies, and putting on clean and fresh Apparel: And, that this was a Custom among other Nations, as well as the *Jeaus*, when they set about any solemn and religious Office, is plain from that Passage in *Euripides*, where *Alcestis*, being to perform some holy Rites in Behalf of her Children,

ὕδασι ποταμίοις λευκὸν χροῖα
'Ελυσσάτ', ἐκ δ' ἑλῶσα κεδρίνων δόμων
'Εσθῆτα, κόσμοντ', εὐπρεπῶς ἡσκήσατο.
Καὶ γὰρ σθεν ἐστίας καλὴν ἔατο.

ALCESTIS, ACT I.

But of all other Nations, the *Egyptians* (as *Herodotus* tells us, l. 1. c. 37.) and more especially their Priests, were most remarkable for this Sort of Cleanness. "They shav'd their Bodies all over every third Day: They bathed themselves in cold Water twice a Day, and twice a Night; and wore constantly nothing but Linen Vestments, and Shoes made of *Papyrus*, for this Reason, I suppose, because they were the most proper to be wash'd." Not that we are to suppose, that God respects a Worshipper for his spruce Appearance, so long as his Conscience is polluted within. In Sordidness indeed there is something distasteful, and 'tis an unseemly Thing to appear before a great Man in dirty Apparel: But the principal Design of God's appointing this outward Cleanliness, was, to be a Sign, and Memorandum to the Person approaching his Presence, what the inward Temper and Complexion of his Mind should be; and therefore we find the *Royal Psalmist*, in Allusion to this very Custom, declaring his pious Purpose, *I will wash my Hands in Innocency, and so will I go to thy Altar*. Psal. xxvi. 6. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentary.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

As soon as *Jacob* came to *Bethel* (where *Deborah*, his Mother's Nurse, happened to die) he erected an Altar, as God had commanded him, whereupon he performed his Vow; and, not long after, God appeared to him again, confirming the Change of his Name, and giving him fresh Assurances of his Design to multiply his Posterity, and to give him the Inheritance of the Land of *Canaan*; which induced

|| In Gen. xxiv. 59. we read, that *Deborah* went along with her Mistress *Rebekah*, when *Isaac*'s Steward was sent to conduct her out of *Mesopotamia*; how is it then, that we find her here in *Jacob*'s Retinue so long afterwards, and when he was returning from the same Place? The *Jewish* Doctors tell us, that *Rebekah*, having promised her Son, at his Departure, that she would send for him again, as soon as she found him out of Danger, did now send *Deborah* to fetch him back. But, besides that a younger Messenger would have been much more proper, we do not find that *Jacob* was sent for, but that he left the Country, by God's Appointment, and upon the bad Usage of his Father-in-law. Some *Christian* Commentators are therefore of Opinion, that, after she had brought her Mistress *Rebekah* to her Marriage, and seen her well settled in her Family, she went back to *Haran* again, and there dwelt in *Laban*'s House, 'till, upon *Jacob*'s returning home, she, having a Desire to see her old Mistress once more, put herself under his Convoy. Others again suppose, that *Jacob* had been at his Father's House before this Time; or that, after *Rebekah*'s Death, *Deborah*, hearing of his Return into *Canaan*, might be desirous to spend the Remainder of her Life with his Wives, who were her Countrywomen. Any of these Conjectures may be sufficient to solve the Difficulty of her being found in *Jacob*'s Family; and the Reason, why *Moses* takes Notice of her Death, is, not so much because it was a Circumstance of Moment enough to be preserv'd in History, as that it was of Use to assign the Reason, why the *Oak*, near which she was buried, and which perhaps was still standing in his Days, came by its Name. But what will, in some Measure, serve, both to vindicate the *sacred Historian*, and to shew, at the same Time, how much these *Nurses*, and Women, who had the Care and Education of Persons of Birth and Quality, were honour'd and esteem'd in those early Days, is a Passage, upon the like Occasion, in the Poet *Virgil*.

Tu quoque litoribus nostris, *Æneia* Nutrix,
Æternam moriens famam, *Caieta*, dedisti.
Et nunc servat honos sedem tuus, ossaque nomen
Hesperia in magna (si qua est ea gloria) signat. *Æneid.* l. 7.

induced him to erect a Pillar of Stone (whereon he poured a Drink-offering, and Oil) as a lasting Monument of his Gratitude and Devotion.

THE Desire, which *Jacob* had to visit his aged Father, made his Stay in *Bethel* not long: And therefore removing from thence, he intended to have reached † *Ephrah* (which was not far distant) that Night, but was prevented by *Rachel's* falling in Labour of her second and last Child, for of him she died, as soon as she was delivered, and had just Time to name him *Benoni*, i. e. the Son of Sorrow; but his Father, unwilling to perpetuate the Remembrance of so melancholy a Subject, called him † *Benjamin*, which signifies *the Son of my Right-hand, or my Strength*. She was buried in the Way to *Ephrah*, where her Husband built * a Monument of Stone over her Grave, which the sacred

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.
Rachel's
Death and
Burial.

† This Place was afterwards called *Bethlehem*, a City about two Leagues distant from *Jerusalem*, famous for the Birth of *David*, King of *Israel*, but infinitely more so, for the Birth of *Christ*, the Son of God, and Saviour of the World. *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† From the different Names, which the Father and Mother gave this Son of theirs, some have observ'd, that Names are oft-times strangely adapted to Things, and the Presages of Parents have antiently been observ'd to be fulfilled.

————— *Heu nunquam vana parentum*

Auguria —————

which was certainly no where more, than in the Fate of *Benjamin's* Posterity, since no Tribe in *Israel* was more valorous, and yet none more subject to Disasters, than *his*; since it was almost quite extirpated in the Time of the Judges, Ch. xx. and yet, before the Conclusion of that Age, became so powerful, as to have the first King of *Israel* chosen out of it. *Patrick's Commentary*.

* The learned *Bochart* is of Opinion, that this Monument of *Rachel's* (which is the first, that we read of in Scripture) was a Pyramid, curiously wrought, and raised upon a Basis of twelve large Stones, whereby *Jacob* intended to intimate the Number of his Sons. It was certainly standing in the Time when *Moses* wrote, Ver. 20. and just before *Saul* was anointed King, there is some mention made of it, 1 Sam. x. 2. But that the present Monument cannot be the same, which *Jacob* erected, is very manifest from its being a modern and Turkish Structure. Mr. *Le Brun*, who was at the Place, and took a Draught of it, says, that the Tomb is cut into the Cavity of a Rock, and

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch xxxvii.

sacred Historian tells us was extant in his Days. But this was not the only Misfortune which attended *Jacob* in this Place ; his eldest Son *Reuben*, having taken a Liking to *Bilhah*, the concubinary Wife, which *Rachel* had given him, made no Scruple to commit Incest with her, which Thing grieved his Father so, that, though he forbore taking any present Notice of it, yet he could not but (a) resent it at his dying Hour. Soon after this *Jacob* left this melancholy Place, and came at length to *Mamre*, the Place of his Father's Abode, who was doubtless not a little overjoyed at the Return of his Son, after so long an Absence.

THE OBJECTION.

“ IT cannot be denied indeed, but that *Laban* dealt
 “ very treacherously with his Son-in-law, (after he had
 “ undergone so long a Servitude for his *Mistress*) in palm-
 “ ing one Daughter upon him instead of another ; but still
 “ it must be confessed, that *Jacob* was more than even
 “ with him, in the Manner of enriching himself by sup-
 “ planting his Father-in-law of the best of his Cattle. *La-*
 “ *ban*, to be sure, understood the Bargain in the most ob-
 “ vious and natural Sense of the Words. By *these Jacob*
 “ was to give up to him all the Lambs and Kids, that
 “ were *white*, and to reserve to himself those, that were
 “ *party-coloured*. There was no Suspicion of using any
 “ Art in this Case : He meant no more, than a bare *casual*
 “ Production, and *Jacob*, to make him believe he intend-
 “ ed the same, lays his Hand on his Heart, as it were, and
 “ hopes that *his Righteousness would answer for him in*
 “ *the Time to come* : But, notwithstanding all this Air of
 “ Honesty, we find him betaking himself to an Artifice,
 “ which he knew would do the Work ; tho’ it badly be-
 “ came an honest Man to study how to *outwit* another,
 “ who dealt upon the *Square*, and had no Suspicion of any
 “ fraudulent Reserves in the Bargain.

“ BUT

covered with a Dome, supported by four Pillars, on Fragments of a Wall, which open to the Sepulchre. The Work is rude enough, and without any Ornament ; but the whole is as entire, as if it had been but just made, which makes it hard to imagine that it had subsisted ever since *Jacob*’s Time. *Maundrell*’s Travels, and *Calmet*’s Dictionary.

(a) Gen. xlix. 4.

“ BUT well might he be deem'd perfidious to Man, when
 “ we find him making a Vow to God, conceived in Terms
 “ that seem *mercenary* enough, and as if he were insisting
 “ upon Conditions with the Almighty ; and yet neglecting,
 “ for many Years, to perform it, though God had abun-
 “ dantly made good the Covenant on his Part, and brought
 “ him in Triumph, as it were, into the Country, and
 “ within the very Confines of the Place, where the Vow
 “ was made ; when, notwithstanding all these Blessings
 “ from the divine Bounty, we find him tamely permitting
 “ Idolatry, and *strange Gods*, to continue in his Family,
 “ and never once thinking of a Reformation, until he was
 “ summon'd to appear before God ; when we find him be-
 “ traying the Rights of *Primogeniture* (which cost him some
 “ Perfidy to attain) in the abject Messages and Speeches, he
 “ made to his Brother ; violating the Laws of *Chastity* in
 “ the *incestuous* Marriage of two Sisters at once ; and (what
 “ looks very odd, as well as presumptuous) in daring to
 “ *wrestle*, and contend with his Maker.

A. M.
 2149, &c.
 Ant. Chris.
 1855, &c.
 From Gen.
 xxviii. 10. to
 Ch. xxxvii.

“ THERE is something so gross in the Notion of a Man's
 “ *wrestling* with God, something so incongruous, so in-
 “ compatible, that we should rather think it possible for his
 “ two Sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, to attack a *whole* City,
 “ massacre the Men, plunder the Country, and take the
 “ Women and Children Captives, and all this with two
 “ pair of Hands, than for their Father *Jacob* to encounter,
 “ were it but a created Angel, and yet prevail.

“ *JACOB* however, in the main, might be a very good
 “ Man, but we cannot but think that his Example was,
 “ in a great Measure, lost in his Family ; when we find his
 “ eldest Son violating his Father's Bed (a Fact, which
 “ *Moses* might as well have omitted, if but for the Ho-
 “ nour of the *Jewish* Nation) and the two next imbruing
 “ their Hands in innocent Blood, and even prostituting the
 “ Credit of a *Sacrament*, to accomplish their *vindictive*
 “ Ends.

“ *SHECHEM* we allow might have suffer'd, and others,
 “ that were *accessory* in injuring the young Lady, and put-
 “ ting a Slur upon the Family ; but what Account can we
 “ give for their murdering those, who had no Hand in the
 “ *Rape*, and for making free Booty of the Women, who
 “ (had they known it) would have probably prevented it,
 “ and of the little *Children*, who had no Notion wherein
 “ they had offended, and could give no Reason, why they
 “ were enslav'd ?

A. M.

2149, &c.

Ant. Chris.

1855, &c.

From Gen.

xxviii. 10. to

Ch. xxxvii.



“ WHAT Account indeed can be given for several other Actions in this Period of History; particularly for *Rachel's* coveting of *Reuben's Mandrakes*, and purchasing them of his Mother at so odd a Rate? Women, that are pregnant, we know, have oftentimes the Cravings of their Appetites very unaccountable; but this was not *Rachel's* Case, and therefore, one would think she should not so passionately have desired a *Fruit* (if it was a Fruit) which is known to be disagreeable to the Smell, and confessedly of so vile a Taste, that the meanest Peasant would refuse it.

“ WHAT Account can be given for her stealing away her Father's *Gods*, (such *Gods*, as no Man can inform us what they were) and, at the Expence of a Lye, hiding them from his Search? Great Care did poor *Rebekah* take, to secure her darling Son from marrying into an idolatrous Family, and yet she seems not to have mended the Matter much, when she sent him into her own, wherein the very *Damsels* were found to be such *Bigots*.

“ To name but one more: What Account can be given for that eager Desire, which these patriarchal Matrons express'd, to give their Handmaids to their Husbands, that by them they might have Children, rather than none at all? 'Tis a Thing somewhat extraordinary, for a Woman to encourage her Husband's Adultery; nor can we conceive how a Child, born of the Maid's Body, can become the Right and Property of the Mistress, any other Way, than by Adoption, be it never so much (*b*) born upon her Knees.”

Answer'd,
by shewing
that Jacob
was not culp-
able in get-
ting the best
of Laban's
Cattle to
himself.

THE worst Accusation against our Patriarch, is, that of his *purlaining* (as some may call it) or appropriating to himself a considerable Part of *Laban's* Substance; and Shame light on him, who pretends to apologize for this, in order to give Countenance to any *Trick* or *Collusion* in Matters of Commerce. The Scripture only relates the Fact, without either Censure or Approbation: And we read it to wrong Purpose, if, because we find a Thing recorded of a Patriarch, and yet not censur'd by the holy Penman, we therefore immediately conclude it to be right (*c*). Men will be Men, full of Imperfections, and govern'd by their Passions, so long as they live in this World; nor are the *Examples*, propounded in Scripture to beget in us Humility and Watchfulness.

fulness upon every Remembrance of human Frailty, but the A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chris. 1855, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 20. to Ch. xxxvii.
Laws contain'd therein, which *are true and righteous altogether*, to be the Rule and Measure of our Conduct. We readily grant therefore, that this Action of *Jacob's*, considered in itself, and according to the Rules of strict Justice, can hardly be vindicated; but then we are to remember, that there was a much superior Agent, even the great Proprietor of the World, and who has an undoubted Right to transfer Possessions where he pleases, by whose Direction it was done.

FOR suppose we allow (what some great Men, both *Physicians* and *Philosophers*, are wont to maintain) that the Fancy of the Dam, in the Time of Conception, is of Power sufficient to influence the Form, and Shape, and Colour of the *Young*, and to produce the Effect, which it had upon *Laban's* Cattle; yet we cannot imagine that *Jacob* knew any Thing of this Secret. Men had not as yet enquir'd into the Powers of Nature, and Observations of this Kind were not much regarded. (d) Religion, and the Worship of God, was, in these Days, the *Wisdom of the World*; and a Simplicity of Life, and Integrity of Manners more studied, than any curious and philosophical Speculations. If Study and Philosophy had help'd Men to this Knowledge, how came *Laban* and his Sors to be utter Strangers to it? And yet, had they not been Strangers, they could not but apprehend, that *Jacob* might by Art *variegate* the Cattle, as he pleased, and would not therefore have made so weak a Bargain with him. They certainly therefore had no Notion that any such Thing could be done; neither had *Jacob* any Intelligence of it, when he made the Contract with *Laban*; but, being resolv'd to be contented with what the Divine Providence should allot him, he made choice of the *speckled* Cattle, merely to put an End to all Cavils about Wages, as not doubting but that God would so order Matters, that, in the Event, he shou'd have enough: And therefore his Words, *So shall my Righteousness answer for me in the Time to come*, are just as if he had said; (e) "I may be thought to have acted imprudently in naming this Hire, as if it were impossible for Cattle, that are all *white*, to bring forth any, but such as are like themselves; but, in the Result, it will appear, that God had respect to my just Dealing, and this you will plainly see, when you come to pay me my Wages."

L 3

BUT

(d) *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 7. (e) *Bibliotheca Bib.* Vol. I.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10.
to Ch.
xxxvii.

BUT tho' *Jacob*, at first, might be ignorant of the Secret, yet we cannot deny, but that, after the Bargain was made, God might give him some Intimation of it, and perhaps might enjoin him to put it in Execution; and yet, after all, he might not apprehend any natural Efficacy in the Thing. Instances there are more than enough in Scripture of God's requiring Persons to perform such Actions, as might testify their Faith, and Reliance on his Promises, in order to receive such Blessings, as he intended for them. Thus *Naaman* the Syrian, when he came to beg of God a Cure of his Leprosy, was directed (*f*) to wash seven Times in Jordan. Washing in Jordan was to be an Evidence of his believing that God would heal him, and, upon his giving this Evidence, he was cur'd; which was the Case of *Jacob* here before us. God had told him that (*g*) he had seen all, that *Laban* had done unto him, but that he would take Care that he should not hurt him; that all *Laban's* Contrivances to defraud him of his Wages he would turn so much to his Advantage, as that they should tend to the Increase of his Prosperity; and then very probably (as a Token of his Belief and Dependance on him) he commanded him to take peeled Rods, and use them as he directed. *Jacob* believed, and did as he was commanded: But, all this while, he might no more think, that the peeling of Rods of green Boughs, and laying them in the watering Places, where the Flocks were to drink, was a natural Way to cause them to bring forth spotted and speckled young ones, than *Naaman* did, that washing in a River was a Cure for a Leprosy. But, even suppose the Case, that *Jacob* had the Notion, that party-coloured Rods might be a natural Means to produce party-coloured Cattle; yet, if he used them in Obedience to the divine Command, and not merely as a Means to enrich himself at the Expence of another, we cannot perceive wherein he was culpable. God Almighty determined to punish *Laban* for his Injustice, and to reward *Jacob* for his Fidelity. He revealed to *Jacob* the Manner, in which he design'd to bless him, and ordered him to do an Action, as a Token of his Reliance on him, for the Performance of his Promise. *Jacob* faithfully observed the Orders, that were given him, and the Event prov'd accordingly.

HERE was no Trick, no Circumvention in the Matter; tho' it must be allow'd, that, had it been lawful for any private Person to make *Reprisals*, the injurious Treatment he

(*f*) 2 Kings v. 10. (*g*) Gen. xxxi. 12.

he had received from *Laban*, both in imposing a Wife upon him, and prolonging his Servitude without Wages, was enough to give *Jacob* both the *Provocation*, and *Privilege* so to do. God Almighty however was pleased to take the Determination of the whole Matter into his own Hands; and therefore the true Conclusion is, what *Jacob* himself expresses, in his Speech to his two Wives, *Ye know, that, with all my Power, I have served your Father, and your Father hath deceived me; and changed my Wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, the speckled shall be thy Wages, then all the Cattle bare speckled; and if he said thus, the ring-streaked shall be thine Hire, then bare all the Cattle ring-streaked. Thus God hath taken away the Cattle of your Father and hath given them to me.*

A MAN so highly favoured by God, and so sensible of his peculiar Goodness, can scarce be supposed capable of making any Vow with a mercenary View, or of neglecting to perform it, when made. The Vow, which the Patriarch made upon his Journey into *Mesopotamia*, is conceiv'd in these Terms. (b) *If God will be with me, and keep me in this Way, that I go, and will give me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, so that I come again to my Father's House in Peace, then shall the Lord be my God; i. e. I will religiously worship and serve him: But it is an unfair Construction to say, that, unless God did bring him home in Peace, he wou'd not worship him. The Right, which God has to the Service and Homage of his Creatures, is absolute and unalienable: His Dominion, his Power, his Goodness, Covenant, and Promises, do all require this of us; and therefore the Words must mean, either that, besides God's natural Property in him, he should have also a farther Demand of Duty upon him, in consequence of this Vow; or (i) that he would perform some signal Service to him, and worship him with a more than ordinary Devotion, consecrating (as it follows) the Place, where he then stood, to his Honour; offering him Sacrifices; and giving him the Tenth of all he had, to maintain this Worship.*

SUCH is the Sense of the Vow; and the Conditions relating to it seem to denote the secret Wish and Desire of his Soul, and not any express Stipulation with God. Man certainly cannot insist on Terms with his Maker, but he may desire, and humbly hope for a Supply of his Wants. More than this the Patriarch does not expect; and less than this

A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1855, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 20. 10 Ch. xxxvii.

God never intended to give. *Our heavenly Father knows that we have need of Food to eat, and Raiment to put on,* and 'tis a Renunciation of our Dependance upon his *providential* Goodness not to ask them. To serve God for no Consideration, but that of his own Glory, is a Notion, that may well enough comport with our future exalted State, when we shall *hunger no more, neither thirst any more,* and where our Service will always be attended with Vision; but, while we are invested with these weak and frail Bodies, they, and their Concerns will tenderly affect us, and God, who *considers whereof we are made,* expects no other, than that they should.

CONSIDERING then the Circumstances, that *Jacob* was in, leaving now his *own*, and going into a *strange Country*, we need not much wonder that we find him solicitous *for his daily Bread.* With his Staff he passed over Jordan; and when he returned with a great Retinue, the grateful Acknowledgment, which he makes upon that Occasion, he expresses in these Words; (*k*) *I am not worthy of the least of all the Mercies, and of all the Truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant;* and a Temper like this would never have neglected to *pay its Vows unto the most High,* had not the Patriarch either met with Obstructions, that made it not safe for him to go, or waited, till God (who had all along conducted him hitherto) should direct him to go to the Place appointed for such Oblation.

The Reformation in his Family what.

BEFORE he came to that Place indeed, we are told that he (*l*) *commanded his Household, and all that were with him, to put away the strange Gods, that were among them.* And from hence it may be presum'd, that there were several of his Family (and possibly *Rachel* herself) addicted to Idolatry, which he might connive at; but this is a Mistake, which arises purely from the Faultiness of our *Translation.* There the Word *strange* is supposed to refer to *Gods*, and to be another Name for *Idols*: Whereas the Words, (*Elohei ban-necar*) do properly signify *the Gods of the Stranger, that was among them,* i. e. the Gods of the *Shechemites*, whom they had taken Captive, and brought into *Jacob's* Family. This alters the Sense of the Words quite, and throws the Charge of Idolatry, not upon *Jacob's Household*, but upon the *Strangers*, that were in it. The Captives of *Shechem*, which his Sons had taken, were now to be incorporated into his Family, and put under new Restrictions.

(*k*) Gen. xxxii. 10.

(*l*) Ch. xxxv. 2.

strictions. Whatever Singularities were in their Dress or A. M. Ornaments, or in the Rites and Usages of Religion, they ^{2149, &c.} had been accustomed to, these he intended to abrogate, and ^{Ant. Chris. 1855, &c.} to reduce them all to the same Purity of Worship, and Simplicity of Life and Manners, which he design'd to keep up ^{From Gen. xxviii. 20. to Ch. xxxvii.} among them. And this is so far from being a Stain upon his Conduct, (as if he were a tame Conniver at Impiety) that we find him undertaking the Reformation even of *Strangers*, as soon as they were come under his Roof, with a Spirit and Resolution, not unlike that of holy *David*, (m) *Mine Eyes look unto such, as are faithful in the Land, that they may dwell with me, and who so leadeth a godly Life, he shall be my Servant.*

SOME Writers have made it a Question, how *Jacob*, upon his Return home, should know where his Brother *Esau* dwelt, and why he should send him so humble and submissive a Message: But (n) we can hardly imagine that *Jacob* should be so imprudent, as to carry his Wives, Children, and Substance into *Canaan*, without knowing whether he might safely venture thither. 'Tis presumable therefore, that while he rested at *Gilead*, he sent Messengers to enquire, whether his Father was alive; what Condition he was in; how the People of the Land were affected to him; and whether he might come, and live with Security near him. From these Messengers he might learn the Place of his Brother's Habitation; and, when he found that he should meet with no Obstruction, if he could but reconcile *Esau* to him, he very prudently sent to him likewise, with an Intent (if he found him inexorable) to bend his Course another Way. And indeed, if we consider what had passed between *Esau* and *Jacob*, before the latter went from home, we shall soon find Reason enough why *Jacob* should send to him, before he adventur'd to come, and sit down with his Substance near his Father. *Esau* still expected to be his Father's Heir, especially as to his *Temporalities*; and therefore, if *Jacob* had returned home without *Esau's* Knowledge, this, at their Father's Death, would have laid the Foundation of a greater Misunderstanding, than ever: For *Esau* would then have thought, that his Brother had been inveigling his Father, and drawing a great Part of his Substance from him. He could never have imagin'd, that any Person, in a State of *Servitude*, cou'd have acquir'd so large a Fortune; and therefore, when he came to see all that Wealth,

(m) Psal. ci. 8, 9.

(n) *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 8.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

Wealth, (which he knew nothing of before) he must have concluded that he had defrauded him.

'T WAS not from Pride or Vanity therefore, or to gratify an ostentatious Humour, that *Jacob* sent his Brother an Account of his prosperous Circumstances; but, partly to recognize the Goodness of Providence, which had so prosper'd him, and partly to let him know, that he was not come to raise any Contributions, either upon him, or the Family; that he had brought his Substance with him from *Haran*, and was not going into *Canaan* to do him any Wrong.

No Object-
ness in his
Address.

THE whole Design of this Interview with *Esau* was to procure a firm Reconciliation with him; and therefore it is no Wonder, that *Jacob* should make use of such Terms, as were most likely to ingratiate. He knew his Brother's rugged and haughty Temper, and consider'd him as a Person, who, by his Valour and Conduct, had rais'd himself to a Principality and Dominion, whilst himself, for twenty Years together, had liv'd in no better Capacity, than that of a Servant; and therefore he might justly think, that this Difference of Appellations did not misbecome their different Conditions of Life.

By the divine Direction indeed, he was constituted *Esau's Lord*, nor did he forego that Prerogative by calling himself *Esau's Servant*. *Lord* and *Servant* were no more than, (what they are now) certain Modes of *Civility*, which pass'd between Persons of good Breeding, without ever adhering to their strict Acceptation; and therefore *Jacob* might make his Addreses to *Esau* in this Manner, without any Derogation to his spiritual Pre-eminence, and, confining himself to the Bounds of Nature, might reverence him as his elder Brother.

BUT, how jealous soever we may be of *Jacob's* Honour, 'tis certain that the Almighty approv'd of his Conduct, by himself interposing to bring about the desir'd Reconciliation Before this Interview with his Brother, and while he lay under terrible Apprehensions of his Displeasure, (o) *the Angels*, we are told, met him. They met him, i. e. they shewed themselves to him, to assure him of their Custody; and by and by we see what follow'd: (p) His Brother *Esau*, contrary to his natural Roughness, and avow'd Revenge, comes, and treats him in a most friendly Manner; which sudden Change in *Esau*, we may reasonably suppose, was occasion'd by one of those Angels, who appear'd; and, who working upon

upon his Humours and Fancy, sweeten'd him into a particular Benignity of Temper, so that *Jacob*, by his humble and submissive Behaviour, gain'd his End.

THERE is this peculiar Hardship upon *Jacob*, that, in the Matter of *Leah*, he was perfectly impos'd upon; that he had no Design of having any Communion with her; was contracted to her Sister; and in all Probability, had he enjoy'd her first, would never have had Concern with any other. But the Misfortune was, that, in the other's nuptial Night, he had carnal Knowledge of her, and thereupon was induced to think, that he could not honestly leave her. Her Sister *Rachel* was all this while (bating Consummation) his lawful Wife, to whom he was contracted, to whom he was solemnly married; and therefore he cou'd not in Justice relinquish her neither. In this *Dilemma* he was, in a Manner, under a Necessity of adhering to both; and, as *Polygamy* was not at that Time interdicted, he thought he might do it without any Violation of the Laws of God. The only Question is, whether he did not incur the Sin of *Incest* in so doing? And to this some *Jewish* Doctors answer, that the Prohibition of Marriages, within such Degrees of *Consanguinity*, was restrain'd to the Land of *Canaan* only; and that therefore it was not unlawful for *Jacob*, in *Haran*, to take two Sisters, nor for *Amram*, in *Egypt*, to take his Father's Sister: And to this Purpose they observe farther, that in the *Mosaick* Law itself, and particularly in the 20th Chapter of *Leviticus*, where the Sentence of Excision is pronounc'd against incestuous Marriages, there is no Punishment assign'd to him, who shall marry two Sisters, which, as they will have it, was, for the Honour of *Jacob*, omitted. However this be, 'tis certain that there is no such Toleration under the *Christian* Dispensation; and therefore he, who pretends to pronounce any Thing upon a Case so singular, as this of our Patriarch's is, should consider the different State of Things, before the Promulgation of the Law; during the Obligation of it; and since the Commencement of the Gospel; which undoubtedly prohibits both a *Plurality* in Wives, and *Consanguinity* in Marriages, and requires of its *Votaries* the strictest Chastity, from a Consideration and Motive, which neither the *Law of Nature*, nor the *Law of Moses*, knew any thing of; (q) *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a Price, therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*

ON

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.
Jacob's Case
in Relation
to Polyga-
my, and
Incest.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch xxxvii.

His Wreft-
ling account-
ed for.

OF all the Adventures, which happen'd to *Jacob*, that of his *Wreftling* is deservedly reckon'd one of the strangest, and has therefore been made a Matter of doubt, whether it was a *real Event*, or a *Vision* only. (r) *Maimonides*, and some other *Hebrew*, as well as *Christian*, Interpreters, are of Opinion, that all this was transacted only in *Jacob's* Imagination. They suppose, that the *Patriarch*, being strongly possessed with the Sense of the Danger he was going to encounter, saw, in a *Vision*, a Man coming to him, and who, after some Altercations, began to *wrestle* with him; that the Conflict between them continu'd till Break of Day, when his *Antagonist*, not able to get the better, desired to be gone, &c. and that, as a Proof, that this Vision was more than an ordinary Dream, it seem'd to him, that the Angel touch'd his Thigh, and, in effect, as soon as he awoke, he found himself lame, probably by the Force of his Imagination.

If this Explication be admitted, the whole Difficulty is at an End. 'Tis natural perhaps for a Man, under the Apprehensions of a dreadful Foe, to dream of *fighting*; and to dream, at the same Time, that he comes off victorious, might be accounted an happy *Omen*. But it must be confess'd, that the *Analogy* of the Story, and more especially *Jacob's* Lameness, which was consequent upon his Conflict, will not suffer us to think that all this was only in a Dream. The more general therefore, and indeed the more rational Opinion is, that this *Wrestling* was *real*, and that *Jacob* was actually awake, when engag'd in it: But then the Question is, who the Person was, that did encounter him?

ORIGEN, I think, is a little singular and no ways to be justified in his Conceit, when he tells us, that the Person, with whom *Jacob* wrestled, was an *evil Angel*, in Allusion to which he thinks that the Apostle grounds his Exhortation: (s) *Finally, my Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, for we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkeness of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places.* But that *Jacob*, who, at this Time, was so immediately under the Divine Protection, should be submitted to the Assault of a *wicked Angel*; that he should merit the Name of *Israel*, i. e. *Conqueror of God*, for overcoming such an one, or call the Place of Combat *Peniel*,

(r) Vid. *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Voll. II. Exercit. 17. and *Le Clerc's* Commentary and *Calmet's* Dictionary, (s) Eph. vi. 10.

Peniel, i. e. the *Face of God*; in Commemoration of his Conflict with such an one, is very absurd, if not an impious Suggestion. Those, who espouse this Opinion, may possibly be led into it from a Thought, that the Person, here contending with *Jacob*, was an *Enemy*, and come with a malevolent Intent against him; whereas nothing can be more evident, (especially by his blessing him before they parted) that he came with a quite contrary Design. (t) Among the People of the *East*, from whence the *Grecians* came, and brought along with them several of their Customs, *Wrestling* was an Exercise in great Vogue, as highly conducive to the Health and Strength; and a common Thing it was, for two Friends, when they met together, to amuse and recreate themselves in this Way. The *Jewish* Doctors therefore seem to be much in the right, when they maintain, that the Person, who contended with *Jacob*, was a *good Angel*; and, as their settled Notion is, that those heavenly Spirits sing, every Morning, the Praises of God, at the Approach of Day; so the Request, which his *Antagonist* makes, (u) *Let me go, for the Day breaketh*, shews him to be one of the angelick Host, who had stayed his prefixt Time, and was now in haste to be gone, in order to join the heavenly *Choir*: For the Prophet *Hosea*, I think, has determin'd the Matter very plainly, when, speaking of *Jacob*, he tells us that (x) *he took his Brother by the Heel in the Womb, and by his Strength he had Power with God, yea he had Power over the Angel, and prevail'd*.

How *Jacob*, who was an hundred Years old, could be enabled to do all this, must be imputed to some *invisible Power*, that assisted him. (y) An Angel is here, in an extraordinary Manner, sent to encounter him, and he, in an extraordinary Manner, is enabled to withstand him. The whole Scene is contriv'd to cure him of his uneasy Fears, and a proper Medium to do this, was to let him see, that an *old Man* might contest it even with an Angel, and yet not be foil'd; and the Power, he might reasonably conclude, which assisted him in this (if the Matter were to come to Blows with his Brother *Esau*) would so invigorate his little Army of *Domesticks*, as to make them prevail, and become victorious.

It was a common Custom among *Eastern Nations* (as appears from several Passages in Scripture) to convey the Knowledge

(t) *Le Clerc's* Comment in Locum. (u) Gen. xxxii. 26.

(x) Hof. xii. 3, 4. (y) *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

A. M. Knowledge of Things by Actions, as well as Words. To
 2149, &c. this Purpose we find *Zedekiah* (z) making him *Horns of Iron*,
 Ant. Chris. thereby to portend Victory to *Ahab*; and *Elias*, ordering
 1855, &c. *Joash* (a) to strike the Ground with Arrows, thence to pre-
 From Gen. signify his Triumph over the Syrians. Nay, even *Hanni-*
 xxviii. 10. to *bal* himself, (as the Historian (b) tells us) perceiving that
 Ch. xxxvii. his Soldiers were not to be encourag'd with Words, made a
 publick Show for them, not so much to entertain their Sight,
 as to give them an Image and Representation of their own
 Condition. In like Manner, we may suppose, that God
 made use of this Expedient to cure *Jacob* of his Dejection;
 and tho' *Moses* (who cannot be supposed to insert every
 Thing) says nothing of the Angel's giving him this Intima-
 tion, yet we find it (c) in *Josephus*, that, no sooner was
 the *Wrestling* ended, but a Voice called out to him, and
 said, " Comfort thyself in what thou hast done, for it is
 " not a common Adversary, that thou hast foil'd, but an
 " Angel of the Lord: Take it for a Prefage therefore, that
 " thy Posterity shall never fail, and that thou thyself shalt
 " never be overcome."

The Slaugh-
 ter of the
 Sheche-
 mites, by
 Jacob's two
 Sons, cen-
 sur'd, and
 in what
 Sense it was
 probable.

O LORD God of my Father Simeon, to whom thou
 gavest a Sword to take Vengeance of the Strangers, who loosen'd
 the Girdle of a Maid to defile her, and polluted her Virginity
 to her reproach: Wherefore thou gavest their Rulers to be slain,
 so that they dyed their Bed in Blood, being deceiv'd. Thou
 gavest their Wives for a Prey, and their Daughters to be
 Captives, and all their Spoils to be divided among thy dear
 Children, who were moved with thy Zeal, and abhorred the
 Pollution of their Blood, and called upon thee for Aid. (d)
 This is the Preface to the Prayer, which *Judith* makes to
 God, in the apocryphal Book, that goes under her Name.
 And indeed were there no other Arguments to prove this
 Book spurious, this one Passage is enough, where we find the
 most abominable Massacre called a divine Work, and Per-
 fidy, Murder, and Rapine, gilded over with the specious
 Names of Zeal for God, and Indignation against Vice. The
 Abhorrence, which *Jacob* express'd of the Cruelty of his
 Sons, the Sharpness of the Reproaches utter'd against them,
 the Remembrance of it, even to the End of his Life, and
 the Care he took to recapitulate it upon his Death-bed, give
 us a much juster Idea of it, than the Writings of some (c)
Rabbins, who have undertaken not only to excuse, but even
 to

(z) 1 Kings xxii. 11. (a) 2 Kings xiii. 18. (b) *Livy*,
 Lib. xxi. (c) *Antiq. lib. i. c. 20.* (d) *Judith ix. 2, &c.* (e) *Selden*
de Jur. Nat. l. 7. c. 5.

to commend it. As to the Probability of the Fact however, we are not to suppose, that, because *Simeon* and *Levi* are only mention'd, they therefore were the only Persons, who had any Hand in this wicked Exploit. They indeed are only mention'd, because, being own Brothers to *Dinah* both by Father and Mother, and, consequently, more concerned to resent the Injury done to her Honour, they are made the chief Contrivers and Conductors of it; but it is reasonable to think, that the rest of *Jacob's* Sons, who were old enough to bear Arms, as well as the greatest Part of his *Domesticks*, were engag'd in the Execution of it: Because it is scarcely conceivable, how two Men alone should be able to master a whole City, to slay all the Men in it, and take all the Women Captives, who, upon this Occasion, may be supposed more than sufficient to have over-power'd them.

NOTHING is more known, and common in History, than to ascribe an Action (especially in *military* Affairs) to the chief Commanders in it, how many Underagents soever they may think proper to employ: And we should deny *Moses* the common Privilege of an *Historian*, if we should account that a Fault and Omission in him, which in other Writers of the like Nature (especially where they study *Brevity*) is reputed a great Beauty and Perfection. *Moses* however is far from pleading his Privilege in this Respect; for having made mention of *Simeon* and *Levi*, as the principal Leaders in the Action, he then proceeds and tells us, that (f) *the Sons of Jacob*, meaning the rest of his Sons, who were of competent Age (and with them very reasonably their Attendants) *came upon the Slain, and spoiled the City, because they had defiled their Sister.*

It is very remarkable of the *Jewish* Historian *Josephus*, that he gives us no Manner of Account of *Reuben's* Incest, for fear that his recording so vile an Action might leave some Blot of Infamy upon that Patriarch, and his Posterity. But *Moses* has given us a better Proof of his Truth and Integrity, in that he not only mentions this Abomination once, but even, in the Benediction, which his Father gives *Reuben*, makes a Remembrance and Recital of it. And this he did, that he might give us a true Account, why the Right of Inheritance, which was originally in him, came to be conferr'd on *Joseph*; and the *Kingdom*, or Right of Dominion, which was forfeited by his Transgression, came to be translated to the Tribe of *Judah*. This he did, that he might furnish his Countrymen with Matter sufficient for their *Humiliation*,
who,

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.



Why *Moses*
takes Notice
of *Reuben's*
Incest.

A. M.
2149, &c..
Ant. Christ.
1855, &c..
From Ge.
xxviii 10.
to Ch.
xxxvii.

who, by this, and many more Instances of the like Nature, are given to understand, that it was not their *Merit*, but purely God's *Mercy*, which advanced them to the Honour of being his *peculiar People*; and this he did, that he might acquaint us all, how God was pleased to make these great, these elect Heads and Fathers, Instances of human Frailty and Sin, in order to shew, that there is nothing, even nothing in Man, unless God by Grace be with him; that (*g*) of ourselves (as the Apostle words it) *we are not sufficient to do any Thing, as of ourselves, but all our Sufficiency is from God.*

FOR the same Reason, we may imagine, it was, that *Moses* makes mention of *Rachel's* stealing away her Father's *Gods*, as a probable Intimation, that she was not entirely cur'd of the idolatrous Superstition of the Country, from whence she came.

Why Rachel
stole away
her Father's
Idols, and
what they
were.

THE *Jewish* Doctors are generally agreed, that the Word *Teraphim*, which we render *Gods*, is not of *Hebrew* Extraction. The *Septuagint* translates it sometimes an *Oracle*, and sometimes *vain Idols*; and several *Commentators* will have it to be a Word borrow'd from the *Egyptians*, and to import the very same with their *Serapis*. (*b*) The *Jews* indeed pretend that this Idol was the Head of a first-born Son, pluck'd off from the Neck, and embalm'd; under the Tongue of which was fasten'd a *golden Plate*, with the Name of some false Deity engraven upon it, which, being plac'd in a *Nitch*, with lighted Candles before it, gave *vocal* Answers to such as came to consult it: But others rather think that it was the same with what the *Persians* call *Telephim*, more generally known by the Name of *Talismans*, i. e. Images, in human Form, of different Sizes, and different Metals, cast under certain *Constellations*, with the Figures of some *Planets*, and *magical* Characters, engraven upon them; Whereas others again are of Opinion, that the *Teraphim*, which *Rachel* stole, were the *Dii Penates*, or *Household-Gods* of her Father *Laban*, viz. the Images of *Noah*, the Restorer of Mankind, and of *Shem*, the Head of his Family; and therefore they observe, that *Laban*, by way of Distinction, calls them *his Gods*, i. e. the Gods of his *Family*. That these *Teraphim* were Statues, or Images of an human Shape and Figure, is manifest from

(*g*) 2 Cor. iii. 5. (*b*) *Calmet's* Dictionary, and Commentary; & *Jurieu*, *Histoire des Cultes & des Dogmes*.

from (i) *Michal's* putting one of them into her Husband's Bed, when she favour'd his Escape: That, at their first Institution, their Intent was innocent, to be Emblems or Representations only of some renowned Ancestor, whose Memory the Family was desirous to perpetuate; but that, in Process of Time, they came to be look'd upon, as the *Lares*, or *Dii Tutelares* of the House, were made Objects of religious Adoration, and at length perverted to all the vile Purposes of *Necromancy*, a learned Author, (k) who has examin'd this matter to the full, has prov'd beyond Exception.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

BUT whatever Men or fictitious Deities these Figures were made to represent, 'tis certain, that the Use, they were chiefly applied to, was, to foretel future Events, and discover what was hid or lost, and, for this Purpose, were consulted and prayed to as *Oracles*, at certain Times, and under some particular *Aspects* of the Planets. Among other Reasons therefore, for *Rachel's* stealing away her Father's *Terraphim*, this is generally supposed to be one,——That he might not, by enquiring of them, gain Intelligence which Way it was, that *Jacob* had taken his Flight.

THE Truth is, there seems to have been in *Laban* an odd Mixture of Religion. In his Conversation with *Abraham's* Steward, when he came to negotiate a Match for *Isaac*, he seems to express a very devout Sense of the *Being* and *Providence* of God; and yet, at his first coming up with *Jacob*, he seems to be chiefly solicitous for the Loss of his *Gods* (as he calls them) which were but dumb and senseless *Idols*. In the Treaty, which he makes with *Jacob*, he invokes the God of *Abraham*, which is allow'd to be the great God of Heaven and Earth; and yet we can hardly forbear thinking, that he must have believ'd a *Plurality* of Gods in Subordination to the *Supreme*, by Reason of his anxious Concern for these Images. *Jacob* no doubt, during his Abode with him, us'd all the Interest, he had in the Family, to rectify his Notions, and convince him of his Error, but he was not able to prevail; and therefore some imagine that *Rachel* stole away his *Idols*, that she might remove the Occasion of his superstitious Worship, and hinder him from going on in his Impiety.

THESE *Idols*, we may presume, were made of *Gold*, or some very valuable Substance; and therefore it may be sup-

(i) 1 Sam. xix. 13:
des Dogmes.

(k) Jurieu, Histoire des Cultes &

A. M.
2149, *Gen.*
Ant. Christ.
1855, *Gen.*
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.



posed that she took them along with her, not only to destroy them, but to make herself a Reparation likewise for the Wrongs she had receiv'd from him, and whereof we find both the Sisters making this Complaint, (1) *Is there yet any Portion or Inheritance for us in our Father's House? Are we not counted of him Strangers? For he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our Money.*

BUT, even supposing the worst of the Case, that *Rachel* did take with her these Idols, because she still retain'd an Hankering after the Religion of her Ancestors; yet *Jacob* is not to be discommended for marrying one of his own Family, who adher'd to the true Worship of God, tho' mix'd with some superstitious Customs, which he might easily reclaim in Time; rather than any of the *Canaanitish* Line, which was every Day sinking more and more into Idolatry, and for that Idolatry, and other flagitious Practices, were, in Process of Time, to undergo an utter Excision: Especially considering, that, when he came into the Land of *Canaan*, where he had full Liberty of acting as he pleas'd, he made a thorough Reformation in his Family, and had all these little Emblems of her former Superstition taken from her, and destroy'd.

What Reu-
ben's Man-
drakes
were, and
why Rachel
coveted
them.

THE Word *Dudaim*, which we render * *Mandrakes*, is one of those Terms, whose true Signification the *Jews*, at this

* *Calmet*, in his Dictionary, gives us a Description of this Plant, as it is found in the *French King's* Gardens. — Its Root is white, and somewhat rough; is two or three Times as big again as its Stem, and always grows taper. Generally, at some Distance from its upper Part, it divides into two Branches, which is the Reason that this Root has something of the Figure of a Man, whose two Thighs are represented by the two Branches. From the Sides of the Root proceed a great Number of small Fibres, in several Places, which serve to imbibe the Juice of the Earth, for the Nourishment of the Plant. From the Root there arises a round and smooth Stem, of a pretty deep Red; and, at the Top of the Stem, grow four Branches, which spread, at equal Distances, from each other. Every Branch has five Leaves, which are indented, of a dark Green, and terminate in a Point. From the Center of these Branches proceeds another very strait and smooth Stem, at the Extremity of which grows a Knob of about twenty-four Fruits, round, and of a beautiful red; and within this Fruit is a kind of Nut, much of the Figure with a Lentil. This Nut includes in it

the

(1) Gen. xxxi. 14, 15.

this Time, pretend not to understand. There is but one A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chris. 1855, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxviii. Place more in Scripture, wherein it occurs, and that is in the 7th Chapter of *Canticles*, wherein the *Bridegroom* invites his *Spouse* to go with him into the Fields: *Come, my Beloved, let us get up early to the Vineyards, let us see if the Vine flourish, whether the tender Grapes appear, and the Pomegranates bud forth. The Mandrakes give a Smell; and at our Gates are all Manner of Fruits, which I have laid up for thee, O my Beloved.* Here we find it plac'd among the most delicious and pleasant Fruits, the Grape, the Pomegranate, &c. and represented as very fragrant and odorous in its Smell; but the Mandrake, *say some*, is a *stinking* and *ill-scented* Fruit, of a bad Taste, and a cold narcotick Quality; and therefore they have render'd the Word *fine and lovely Flowers*; and some of them will have it to be the *Violet* or *Jessamin*, (which suit very well with the Season of the Year here mentioned) whilst others contend very strongly for the *Lilly*, which, in *Syria*, grew in the Fields, and was of a most agreeable Beauty and Smell.

THAT Passage in *Solomon's Song* however will not suffer us to doubt, but that it was a Fruit (of some Kind or other) and *Ludolff*, (m) in his History of *Ethiopia*, will needs have it to be what the *Syrians* call *Mauz*, a Fruit, much about as big as a small *Cucumber*, that hangs in Clusters, sometimes to the Number of Forty upon the same Stalk, and is in Figure and Taste not unlike the *Indian* Fig.

M 2

IT

the Seed of the Plant, which dies and grows again every Year, and has nothing valuable in it but the Root, whose Virtues are wonderful. Of this Plant (as *Dioscorides* informs us) there are two Sorts: One is black, and called the *female Mandrake*, having Leaves not unlike Lettice, tho' less, and narrower, which spread upon the Ground, and are of a very disagreeable Scent. It bears something like *Servises*, which are pale, and of a strong Smell, with Kernels within, like those of a Pea. It has two or three very large Roots, twisted together, black without, but white within, and cover'd with a thick Rind. The other Sort, or the *male Mandrake*, produces Berries, as big again as those of the *Female*, of a good Scent, and a Colour not much unlike Saffron. Its Leaves are large, white, broad, and smooth, like the Leaves of a Beach Tree, and its Root resembles that of the *Female*, but is much thicker and bigger, and the Quality of them both is to *stupify* and make *sleepy* those that take them. Lib. 6. c. 61.

(m) Lib. i. cap. 17.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

IT is not to be doubted indeed, but that the *Mandrake* in *Palestine* is of a different Kind to what we have in these Climates. St. *Austin*, who thought it a great Curiosity to see one, tells us, that it was very beautiful to the Eye, and of a fragrant Smell, but utterly insipid; so that he wonders what should make *Rachel* set so high a Value upon it, unless it were its Scarceness, and rich Scent. In the Province of *Peking* in *China*, we are inform'd, that there is a Kind of *Mandrake* so valuable, and, when mixed in any Liqueur, makes so rich a Cordial, that a Pound of its Root (for in the Root lies all the Virtue) is worth thrice its Weight in Silver.

IT was a general Opinion among the Antients, that there was a certain Quality in the Juice of *Mandrakes* to excite amorous Inclinations, and therefore they call them *the Apples of Love*, as the *Hebrew* word *Dod* (from whence comes *Dudaim*) is frequently set to signify *Love*. Thus whether we consider this Fruit as pleasant to the Eye, Smell, or Taste, or as a Restorative to Nature, and helpful to Conception, any of these Reasons are sufficient, why *Rachel* should take such a Fancy to them: And, why she purchased them at so strange a Rate, was chiefly occasioned by *Leah's* sullen Reply, that she had taken away her Husband's Affections from her, which provok'd the other, who (according to the establish'd Order of succeeding to his Bed) had certainly the Property in him that Night, to resign him to her.

MOSES however only mentions this Circumstance, to let his Reader know, upon what Occasion it was that *Leah*, after she had done Child-bearing, (as she thought) came to conceive again. (n) It had been below the Dignity of such a sacred History, as his is, to take notice of such trivial Matters, had there not been something of great Consideration in them; and what could that be, but chiefly the Birth of the *blessed Seed*, which was the Object of the Hopes of all pious People in those Days? It is evident from the Conduct both of *Rachel* and her Sister, that it was Children they desired, and not merely the Company of their Husband; nor would their Husband have ever been determined by their blind Bargains, had it not been Matter of pure Indifference to him, whether of their Embraces he went to, so long as his Family was but increased and multiplied.

THAT

(n) *Patrick's Commentary.*

THAT it was a very antient Custom, not only among A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chris. 1835, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxvii. the *Hebrews*, but with many other Nations, and particularly the *Greeks* and *Romans*, in the Marriages both of their Sons and Daughters, and especially of the latter, for the Parents to give with the *Bride* or *Bridegroom*, as Part of the Portion or *Dowry*, a Servant, to abide in their Power and Property, is a Matter so plain, * from sundry Exam- Why the Patriarchal Wives desired Children by their Maids. ples, that it needs no contesting. The great Difficulty is, —For what Reason it was, that these Matrons of old were so very desirous, that their Husbands should have Commerce with these their *dotal* Maids, in case they had no Children of their own: And for the Solution of this we must observe, that, according to the Principles of the oldest Philosophy, SPIRIT is the universal efficient Cause in Nature, but especially in Generation, and in human Generation most of all; so that a *spiritual* Conception must of Necessity precede, and direct every *bodily* one, insomuch that there can be no *corporeal* Conception without a *spiritual* one, but a *spiritual* there may be, without a *corporeal* one, *i. e.* when the Matter, or Medium, is not adapted to that Purpose. Now this *Position* being laid down, it may be observed farther, that these *Matrons* very probably were not ignorant, that the Mother contributes nothing, of herself, towards the Formation of the *Fætus*, and, much less to its Inspiration with Life, but merely the Bearing it in

M 3 the

* In the Tragedy of *Euripides*, which is called *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Clytemnestra* is brought in, as preparing and hastening all Things for the *Nuptials* of her Daughter, who, unknown to her, was devoted for a Sacrifice, and addressing herself in this Manner;

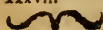
Πάρειμι νυμφαγωγός· ἀλλ' ὀχημάτων
 *Ἐξω πορεύεθ' ἃς φέρω φερνάς κόρη,
 Καὶ πέμπετε εἰς μέλαθρον εὐλαβέμεναι. Aët III.

Old *Demænetus*, in the *Afinaria* of *Plautus*, is told by his Slave,

Dotalem fervum Sauream uxor tua
 Adduxit, cui plus in manu sit quam tibi. Aët I.

These Servants among the *Greeks* were called φέρναι, (from whence is deriv'd the *Latin Verna*) and, by the *Romans*, *Dotales*, *Receptitii*, or *Receptitiæ*. They had likewise the Name of λάρτεις given them, and their Service was expressed by the Word λατρεία, which signifies the Service due from Man to Almighty God; which is wont to be distinguished from any other Sort of Service, and denotes, that such Persons were entirely at their Mistresses Devotion. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I. Annot. 32.

A. M. 2149, &c.
Ant. Christ
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10.
to Ch.
xxxvii.



the Womb; and hence they might infer, that the Bearing it in the Womb was not sufficient of itself to confer a *Right* to the *Fruit of it*, which came thither they knew not how, which they had no Hand in the Fashioning of, and which they were no more able to quicken, than they were to enliven a dead Body. It being therefore no strange Thing, in these Days, for one Man to *raise up Seed* for another, or to propagate by another; by Parity of Reason, they might conclude, that one Woman might as well do the same for another, or *bear* in her stead, under such and such Circumstances, by the Union and Co-operation of their Wills, and strong Attraction of the Imagination in *two* consociating into one. And this was the Consideration, which moved them to press this Matter so very earnestly, as they did: when finding, that, after they had *spiritually* conceived of their Husbands, by taking into them an *ideal* Image for Elaboration, there was wanting Strength in them to bear, and to work out what they had received; they could afterwards have no greater Pleasure, than to appoint one, who should faithfully supply that Part, (wherein they themselves were defective) and thereby be able not only to remedy the *Reproach* of their *Barrenness*, but to establish a stronger Interest in the Family for themselves, and for all, that they could call their *own*.

(o) *THE bearing upon the Knees* therefore (as the Expression is in *Moses*) must certainly denote something more, than that *Rachel* design'd to make herself a Nurse to her Maid, or set a Child upon her Knees, as her own, in which she had no Part or Portion; but that her Servant should conceive, and become with Child through her, as in her Presence, and as it were *upon her Knees*, to the End that her Mistress might be made a Mother by her *Instrumentality*, and might have Children, whom she cou'd call her own, tho' not born of her Body. And, accordingly, we may observe, that *Rachel* herself had this Notion of the Matter; for, upon the Birth of her first Son, born to her by her *Substitute*, she expressly declares that God had *given her a Son*, and (as the Custom for Mothers then was) herself imposed on him a Name, as a Mark of her thinking him really to be *her's*.

Several of
these Facts
confirm'd by
Heathen
Writers.

THUS have we endeavour'd to silence some of those *Cavils*, which may be made against particular Passages in the

the *Mosaick* History, during this Period of Time; and, for the farther Confirmation of its Truth and Authority, we might produce the Testimony of several Heathen Writers, (p) such as *Sanchoniatho*, *Berosus*, *Hecatæus*, *Eupolemus*, and others, as they are quoted by *Eusebius* in his *Præparatio Evangelica*. The Fiction of *Jupiter's Chain* in *Homer*, reaching from Heaven to Earth, as it relates to the divine Providence, had its Original from *Jacob's Ladder*. The Memory of his Wrestling with an Angel has been preserv'd, ever since, by a whole Nation's abstaining from a particular Part of the *Thigh*, which, without that Supposition, cannot be accounted for. *Jacob's* living with his Uncle *Laban* in the Capacity of a Servant, gave Rise to the Story of *Apollo's* being reduced (when expelled from his Father's House) to the Necessity of turning *Admetus's* Shepherd. The Fable of the *Bethleans*, which (q) *Eusebius* takes out of *Philo Biblius*, came undoubtedly from the Altar of *Bethel*; and, to name no more, the whole Business of *Jacob's* Arrival at *Shechem* upon his Return from *Mesopotamia*, of his Daughter *Dinah's* Rape by the Prince of the Country, and of the terrible Revenge, which her Brothers took for that Indignity, is related by *Alexander Polyhistor*, as he is quoted by the same Father, much in the same Order, and with the very same Circumstances, that we find it recorded in the Works of *Moses*.

DISSERTATION III.

Of Jacob's Ladder and Pillar.

TO judge of the Occasion of *Jacob's* Vision, wherein this emblematical Ladder was represented to him, we must imagine, that we saw the Heir of a powerful Family taking his Leave of his aged Parents, and, for fear of an angry Brother, departing from his Father's House; beginning a Journey of 450 Miles, into a strange Country, all alone, on Foot, and without any Servant to attend him; travelling all the Day with a pensive Heart, and forc'd at Night to take up his Lodging in the open Air, and with nothing better, than an hard Stone to be his Pillow: If we suppose *Jacob* in this Condition, I say, we shall soon perceive the Reason, why God thought it convenient, at this Time, to give him Comfort and Consolation in the Way of a Dream.

M 4

THAT

(p) Vid. *Grot. de Verit.* l. 1.

(q) *Præp. Evan.* l. 9. c. 21.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

THAT *Dreams*, or nocturnal Visions, were a common Way of God's revealing himself to Mankind of old, is evident from Instances almost innumerable; and the Reason of his making Choice of this Method might be, either (r) to convince them of his *Omni-presence*, that *he was about their Bed, and about their Paths, and spied out all their Ways*; or to convince them of his constant *Care*, and that he was not unmindful of them, even when they little thought of him, and were most absent from themselves; or to convince them of his unlimited *Power* over their Souls, when even Sleep itself could not hinder his Access to them; or because that the Mind, in the Dead and Silence of the Night, was fitter to receive divine Impressions, when Nature was hush, and the Passions asleep, and no Variety of Thoughts to distract its Attention.

BUT, whatever God's Reasons might be for conveying Things by Dreams, 'tis certain, that the Vision of the *Ladder*, and the comfortable Words, which he spake from the Top of it, made such a lively Impression upon *Jacob*, that he proceeded in his Journey with Chearfulness and Alacrity. (s) *Behold I am with thee, and I will keep thee in all Places, whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this Land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that, which I have spoken to thee of*: These are the verbal Assurances, which God gives *Jacob*; and therefore we may presume that the Representation of the Ladder had something *analogous* in it.

The Mean-
ing of it.

THIS *Ladder* (according to the Sense of the (t) best Interpreters) is an *Emblem* of the divine *Providence*, which governs all Things. Its being *set upon the Earth* denotes the *Steadiness* of Providence, which nothing is able to unsettle; its *reaching up to Heaven* signifies its *Universality*, or that it extends to all Things; the *several Steps of the Ladder* are the Motions and Actions of Providence; the Angels *going up and down* shew, that they are the great Ministers of Providence, never idle, but always employ'd in the Preservation of the Just; *their Ascending* means their going up to receive the divine Orders and Commands; and *their Descending* their coming down upon Earth to put them in Execution. So that, in this *Hieroglyphick*, God signified to *Jacob*, now full of Care and uneasy Apprehensions, that the Man, who was under the Custody and Protection of divine

(r) *Watſii Miscell. sacra de Somniis, Vol. I. xxviii. 15.* (s) *Gen. Maimonides More Nevoc.*

divine Providence, wanted not Company, in a Wilderness; wanted not Security, in the midst of Dangers; wanted not Direction, in the most difficult Undertakings; since there were so many *ministring Spirits*, holding Correspondence between Earth and Heaven, and daily and hourly (u) sent forth from God's Presence to minister unto them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 20. to
Ch. xxxvii.

OTHER Interpretations there are in great Numbers, but too * full of Fancies and Conceits, to be here taken Notice of: One however seems a little more solid, and may not undeserve our Observation. (x) The Promise, (we may remember) which God is introduc'd as making to *Jacob* from the Top of the Ladder, does chiefly relate to his Covenant with *Abraham*, which was principally founded in *Christ*, that chosen Seed, in whom all the Families of the Earth were to be blessed: And, the Analogy of the Thing may induce us to believe, that this Ladder was design'd for a Type and Emblem of the Covenant of Grace, which was in Force from the Time of Man's first Apostacy, but began to be put in Execution at the Incarnation of our Saviour *Christ*, that only Mediator, who open'd an Intercourse between Earth and Heaven; by whose Intercession Plenty of all spiritual Blessings

(u) Heb. i. 14.

* The *Rabbins*, having given us long chimerical Descriptions of this Ladder, will have it represent almost every Thing, that comes into their Fancies: Some pretend, that the ascending Angels were those, who had the Care of *Jacob* in his going: the descending, those, whose Business it was to secure him in his returning from *Mesopotamia*. Another [*Jarchi* on Gen. xxviii. 12.] is of Opinion, that God design'd hereby to point out the Place, where he wou'd have the Temple built one Day; and, to reconcile this Opinion to Geography, he affirms, that God, at this Time, transported to *Luz* the Hill of *Sion*, upon which the Temple at *Jerusalem* was afterwards built. *Philo*, who certainly believ'd a *Metempsychosis*, tells us, that the Angels which *Jacob* saw, are Emblems of Souls, whereof some descend to animate Bodies, whilst others ascend, having quitted the Bodies, which they once animated. *St. Austin* will have this Ladder to represent the Cross of *Christ*; and some of the mystical Divines, making it an Emblem of a contemplative Life, do maintain, that the Angels, ascending the Ladder, are those Believers, whom they call perfect, as having the Faculty of causing their Affections to soar up to the highest Heavens, and that the descending represented those mean and abject Souls, whose Center is the Earth, and whose Delight consists in fleshly Things. *Saurin's* Dissertations.

(x) *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriarch. Vol. II. Exercit. 16.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 20. to
Ch. xxxvii.

Blessings descend to us, and by whose Merits and Doctrines our Natures are *sanctified*, and so become meet to be *Partakers with the Saints in Light*, or to ascend into Heaven. And to this mystical Meaning of the Ladder our Saviour himself may be thought to allude, when he tells us, that (y) *Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man*; which (z) a learned Commentator has, in this Manner, *paraphrased*. “Ye have heard, no doubt, of those of Old, that several Things, relating to the *Messias*, have been represented by *Jacob’s Ladder*; and ye are to know, that they are all now to be accomplish’d in me, and shall every Day be more and more accomplished, until the Time of my Assumption into Heaven. Ye shall know, that Heaven, which by the Sin and Corruption of Mankind was shut in *Adam*, shall, by my Dispensation and Doctrine, be opened again; and that God, being reconciled to the World by me, shall continue in Covenant with them for ever. Ye shall know, that I am that *Ladder*, and *Way* to Heaven, by which ye may gain Admittance to the Father; for I am he, that unites Heaven and Earth together, so that from henceforward the Angels shall continually be passing from the one to the other. In short, ye shall know, that I am the Lord not only of the *visible* Creation, but the Prince likewise of Angels, and all *invisible* Spirits, even the true God. This, I say, ye shall henceforth more fully know by my Doctrine, my Miracles, my Death, my glorious Resurrection, and triumphant Ascension into Heaven.”

Thus, according to the Declaration, which God makes from the Top of the Ladder, it seems reasonable to imagine, that he might have a twofold Design in making this Representation to *Jacob*, viz. by a proper *Type*, to prefigure the Incarnation of his Son, which, like this Ladder, joined Heaven and Earth, the divine and human Natures together; and, by a proper *Emblem* of the Angels ascending and descending upon it, to give him an Evidence of the watchful Providence of God, that attended him. The former of these Designs might perhaps be a little too abstruse for *Jacob’s* Comprehension at present, but the latter he immediately understood; and therefore we find him, as soon as he arose, (out of a grateful Sense of the divine Goodness in sending him a Vision so full of Consolation) erecting, and consecrating

(y) John i. 51.

(z) Bullinger’s Commentary.

ing a Pillar, in order to perpetuate the Memory of so momentous an Event.

IT is the Opinion of some *Commentators* indeed, that, to preserve the Memory of his heavenly Vision, *Jacob* took the Stone, whereon his Head lay, and wherein they discern nothing extraordinary, and set it up, for a Monument, or Pillar, upon the Top of some other Stones, which he had gather'd, and heap'd together: But, besides that the Fancy of an Heap of Stones seems unworthy of the holy Scriptures, and betrays us into a low and trifling Idea of this great Affair; there is not the least Ground, from the Text itself, nor from this *symbolical* Way of transmitting Facts to future Generations, to suppose, that there was any more, than one single Stone.

THE Word *Matzebah*, which our Interpreters render a Pillar, is by the *Septuagint* translated *Στήλη*, by the *vulgar Latin*, *Titulus*; and from hence several, both Antients and Moderns, have suppos'd, that there was an *Inscription* upon this Pillar. The Manner of *consecrating* this Pillar was, by pouring Oil upon it, which *Jacob* might have by him; without a Miracle, (considering how common the Use of Oil was in these hot Countries to refresh the Limbs, when weary with travelling) and how necessary upon that Account it was, to carry some with him in his Journey: Nor is there any Reason to suppose, that *Jacob* made use of this Form of *Consecration*, in Compliance with the Custom of the Country, where he then was. It is uncertain whether this Custom was establish'd in *Jacob's* Time; but, if it was, it is hardly credible that a pious Man, as he is represented, wou'd have adopted a superstitious Ceremony into the Worship of the true God. (a) The much more probable Opinion therefore is, that, as the Rites of *sacrificing* and *Circumcision* were instituted before the Promulgation of the Law; so this manner of consecrating Things, by Way of Unction or Libation, was at first enjoin'd the Patriarchs *Abraham* and *Isaac* by God, and, either by Precept or Tradition from them, came afterwards to be practis'd by *Jacob*. Nor is it unlikely, but that *Jacob's* Practice in this Particular, and the great Veneration, which was afterwards paid to his *monumental* Pillar, might give Occasion * to the worshipping such

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.
The Form
and End of
Jacob's Pil-
lar.

(a) *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar.

* From *Jacob's* pouring Oil upon the Stone of *Bethel*, did arise the Superstition of the Antients for their *Betuli*, which were Stones anointed and consecrated to the Memory of great Men after

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

such erected Stones in future Ages, and (upon such Abuse) of God's so strictly prohibiting any to be set up: (b) *Ye shall not make ye any Idols or graven Image, neither shall ye rear up any Matzebah* (Statue or Pillar) *to bow down unto it, for I am the Lord your God.*

IN the religious Sense of the Word then, *Matzebah* may properly signify a large consecrated Stone, erected *Pillar-wise*, before which Prostrations and Adorations were made, and upon which Oblations and Libations, but not any bloody Sacrifices, were presented: But then the Question is, how *Jacob* cou'd think to secure this Monument from being thrown down by the Natives, or Passengers, or how he cou'd impose a new Name upon it, and establish that Name in future Ages, when the Place had a Name before, and no Person was present to bear Testimony of what he did. This indeed the Scripture gives us no Manner of Account of, and therefore (if we do it but *modestly*) we are left at Liberty to make our own Conjectures.

What it
was,

ACCORDING to the antient *Versions* of the Word, we may suppose, that there was upon this Stone some legible and intelligible Title, or Inscription; nor is it improbable, that the Title shou'd be, what the Patriarch, in a sort of Extasy, called it, *Bethel*, or the *House of God*. How *Jacob* might be provided with an Iron-pen, or *Stile*, for the Purpose of engraving this Title, can be no difficult Thing to imagine, if we do but consider, that the *Stile* was the common Instrument of writing in those Days, which every *Scholar* us'd to carry about with him, and which *Jacob*, *
having

ter their Death. *Sanchoniatho*, or rather *Porphry*, the Author of the Fragment, which *Eusebius* has preserv'd, under the Name of *Sanchoniatho*, attributes the Invention of these *Betuli* to *Saturn*; but the best Account, that can be given of this absurd Practice, is from hence; and a sufficient Demonstration it is, how the best and noblest Acts of Piety may be perverted, and degenerate into mere Stupidity, by a fond superstitious Imitation. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Bethel*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I. Occas. Annot. 30.

(b) Lev. xxvi. 1.

* That *Jacob* was a Man of Learning, and of an extraordinary Genius, is not only a general *Tradition* of the *Jews*, but supported likewise by some Lines in the Character, which the Pen of *Moses* gives us of him. He had certainly great Advantages under his Father, and Grandfather, who justly deserv'd a Name among the oldest *Oriental* Philosophers; and therefore he
is

having led a studious and contemplative Life under his Father and Grandfather, and (as some suppose) under *Melchisedeck* likewise, was not unqualified to make use of; and that the very antient, if not universal Custom of erecting, anointing, and consecrating such like Stones, with an Inscription, either *literal*, or *hieroglyphical*, and sometimes both, could hardly have any other Foundation, than this Practice of his.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxvii.

BUT, besides the bare Inscription of the Name, and Title of the Stone, there might probably be yet something more, to attract the Eyes of the Traveller, and to raise a Veneration for the Place. And therefore, admitting the Stone to be *square*, we find that there were two Oaths, as it were, taken upon it, by the covenanting Parties, *i. e. the Oath of God to Jacob*, repeating the Substance of what he had sworn to his Fathers, and limiting it to him, and his Seed; and *the Oath of Jacob to God*, obliging himself and his Posterity to such a constant Homage, as is therein specified; and, hereupon we may infer, that for the better Preservation of the Memory of this great *League*, there might be written, on one Side, the *Obligation of God*, exactly in the Terms of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Verses, and, on the *opposite*, the *Obligation of Jacob*, as express'd by him in the three last Verses of the 28th Chapter of *Genesis*. And, because it was necessary, that the Name of the Person who erected, and consecrated the Stone, should be preserved; we may farther suppose, that, as God's signing this Covenant on his Part might be in this Form, ANI JEHOVAH, ELOHE ABRAHAM, ELOHE ISAAC, *I the Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac*; by Parity of Reason, *Jacob's* signing might run thus, ANI JACOB, BEN ISAAC, BEN ABRAHAM, *I Jacob, the Son of Isaac, the Son of Abraham*.

ON the *vacant* Sides of the Stone, we may suppose again, that the other awful Sentences, which *Jacob*, upon this Occasion pronounced, (*c*) *How dreadful is this Place! This is the Gate of Heaven, and verily the Lord is in this Place!* were engraven: And, because a very early Custom of crowning such publick Pillars with *Garlands* might very likely

is describ'd, in the *Eastern* Stile, as a *Man dwelling in Tents*, as much as to say, one, who leads a philosophical and contemplative Life, or a *Minister*, or Student of *the House of Learning*, as the *Targums* truly interpret the Phrase. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. I. Occaf. Annot. 35.

(c) Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.

A. M.
2149, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1855, &c.
From Gen.
xxviii. 10. to
Ch. xxxviii.



likely take its Rise from *Jacob's* Practice at this Time, we may therefore be allow'd to make one Conjecture more, viz. that, as *Luz*, near which this Transaction happen'd, had its Name from a Grove of *Almond-trees*, not far distant from it; so *Jacob* might think it very decent, in Memory of the divine Favours there receiv'd, to crown, and adorn the Top of this *titular* Stone, with a Garland of *Almond-branches* taken from thence. All this, we allow, is no more than Supposition and Conjecture: But, without some such Contrivance as this, how could this Stone have been an Instrument to perpetuate the Memory of any Event? How, a Means of *Jacob's* imposing a new Name upon a Place, that was entirely in the Possession of others? Well might the Natives, or Proprietors ask, by *what Authority* this was done; and, since *Jacob* was not there to give them an Answer, his only Way could be, to leave the History, and Occasion of it, engraven upon the *very* Stone.

AND indeed, without some such Supposition, why should this stone, even by different Nations, be accounted such a valuable Piece of Antiquity? Why should the *Jews* be so fond to have it thought, that they had it in the *Sanctuary* of their *second* Temple, and that upon it the *Ark of the Covenant* was plac'd? Since the Destruction of their Temple, why should it be their Custom, one Day in a Year, with great Lamentation, to go, and anoint this Stone, in Remembrance of their Father *Jacob*, and the Covenant made with him? And why should the *Mahometans* pretend, that they have this Stone (tho', by Mistake of one Patriarch for another, they call it *the Stone of Abraham*) set up at their Temple at *Mecca*, which they make their common *Kibla*, or Point of Worship, and before which the Pilgrims pay their solemn Devotions?

THESE, we allow, may be no more than false Pretences; but still they are an Evidence, that this *Pillar* was once held in high Veneration, which it could hardly have been, but must very soon have been buried in Oblivion and Rubbish, had it been no more than a large ragged Stone, without any Thing to distinguish it, i. e. without any Sculpture, or Inscription on it. And therefore, (notwithstanding the Silence of Scripture) we have sufficient Reason to conclude, that this Pillar was erected in order to preserve the Remembrance of the heavenly Vision, which God, in this Place, vouchsafed *Jacob*; that to this Purpose it was engraven with such Inscriptions, as might give Posterity sufficient Intelligence upon what Occasion it was erected; that, by Means

of

of such Inscriptions, it came to be recogniz'd as *Jacob's* A. M. 2149, &c. Ant. Chris. 1855, &c. From Gen. xxviii. 10. to Ch. xxxvii. Pillar, and held in great Esteem in future Generations; that this Pillar thus engraved, (as it was the first of its Kind, that we have upon Record) gave probably the Origin to the Invention of *Stelography*, or the antient Manner of writing upon Stone, ever after; and that the Consecration of this Stone, and the Imposition of a new Name upon the Place where it stood, is enough to justify the Practice of *sanctifying* Places, appointed for religious Worship, by some solemn Form of *Separation*; of calling them the *House of God*, and imputing to them a *relative Holiness*; in Christian Countries, of *dedicating* them to the Memory of departed *Saints* and *Martyrs*; and, every where, of observing that wholesome and devout Advice of the *Preacher*: (d) *Keep thy Foot, when thou goest into the House of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the Sacrifice of Pools. Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thine Heart be hasty to utter any Thing before God, for he is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy Words be few.*

(d) Eccles. v. 1, 2.

CHAP. IV.

*Of the Life of JOSEPH *, which includes the rest of JACOB's.*

The HISTORY.

JACOB had not been long with his Father, before there befel him another sad Disaster. *Joseph* was his beloved A. M. 2276, &c. Ant. Chris. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End. Child,

* Two Reasons are generally assigned, why *Moses* is more prolix in relating the Adventures of *Joseph*, than of any other of *Jacob's* Children: Both because his Life is a bright Example of Piety, Chastity, Meekness, and Prudence; and because it was, by the Means of *Joseph*, that *Jacob* went down into *Egypt*: And, as his going down gave Occasion to the wonderful Departure of the Children of *Israel* from thence, so the History of the *Jews* would have been sadly imperfect, and indeed altogether unintelligible, without a longer Account, than ordinary, of *Joseph's* Life, and Transactions there. *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 20.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Child, as being the Son of his dear departed *Rachel*, and † a Youth of a very promising and extraordinary *Genius*. As a Mark of his peculiar Love, the fond Father gave him Cloathes, richer than he did the rest, and, among others, † one Coat more especially, which was made of a *changeable*, or, *party-colour'd* Stuff. This made his other Brothers envy him not a little; and, what gained him no Good-will among them, was their looking upon him as a *Spy*, because he had told his Father some Things, wherein the Sons of *Bil-dah*

† Most Versions, as well as ours, have made *Jacob* to love *Joseph*, because he was *the Son of his old Age*: Whereas had this been the Cause of his Affection, he must have loved *Zebulun* as much as *Joseph*, because he was of the same Age, and *Benjamin* much more, because he was above fifteen Years younger. It seems therefore, as if they had confounded the Words *Ben-Zekenim*, the *Son of Senators*, or *Elders* (as he is called here) with *Ben Ziknah*, the *Son of old Age*, whereas the former has a Signification quite different. According to the *Hebrew Idiom*, it signifies *the Son, or Disciple of Senators*, i. e. one endued with an extraordinary Wisdom and Prudence; accordingly the *Samaritan*, *Arabick*, and *Persian* Versions have rendered it, *because he was a wise and prudent Son*, tho' even this comes short of the *Energy* of the *Idiom*, and might more properly be rendered *because he was as wise and prudent, as a Senator*. And this justifies the Reason of *Jacob's* extraordinary Love to *Joseph*, because 'tis natural for Parents, especially for Fathers, to admire those Children, who shew any Degree of Wisdom above their Years; whereas to be fond of a Child, begotten in one's old Age, and for no other Reason, is no more than a Piece of Dotage, which *Moses* would hardly have thought worth recording. *Universal History* l. 1. c. 7. and *Howell's History* l. 1.

† The Coat, whereby *Jacob* distinguished his Son *Joseph* from the rest of his Brothers, is generally thought to signify a Garment, that was wrought with Threads of divers Colours, or made up of Pieces of Silk or Stuff, which had much Variety in them; but the Word *Passim*, which is here made use of, according to some learned *Annotators*, does properly signify a *long Garment*, down to the Heels or Ancles, with long Sleeves down to the Wrists, which had a *Border* at the Bottom, and a *Facing* (as we call it) at the Hands, of a Colour different to the Garment, which was accounted noble, as well as beautiful, in antient Times. *Patrick's Commentary*.

hab and *Zilpah* († with whom he was chiefly conversant) † had grossly misbehaved, which made them treat him so very furlily, that, whenever he spake to them, they would scarce give him a civil Answer. But; that which compleated their Envy and Resentment, or rather turned them into an irreconcilable Hatred, was, his *innocently* telling them some of his Dreams, which seem'd to portend his Advancement in the World above them.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

HE told them, that, one Night, he dreamt, that, as he, and they were binding Sheaves together in the Field, his Sheaf stood upright, while theirs fell prostrate before it, as if they had been doing Obeisance; and that, at another Time, he fancied himself mounted on high, and the Sun, Moon, and eleven Stars, doing him the like Homage. This raised the Indignation of the rest, as thinking it a Disparagement to have a *younger* Brother their *Superior*: Which their Father

† He chose the Sons of his Father's Concubines, rather than those of his Wife *Leah*, to be his Companions, on purpose perhaps to avoid the ill Consequences of the latter's Envy and Emulation against him. For, 'tis not unlikely, that *Leah's* Sons, considering the excessive Love, which their Father had for him, might be ready to suspect, that he design'd to bequeath the Right of *Primogeniture* to him, which each of them thinking they had a better Title to, might thereupon be tempted to malign, and mal-treat him: Whereas among the Sons, descended from Concubines, (as having not the like Ambition) he might find better Quarter, and to their Company the rather resort, out of a Principle of Humility and Condescension, and to discountenance the haughty Behaviour of the Sons of *Leah* towards the Sons of the Concubines. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl.* in Locum.

† The *Hebrew*, and the *Alexandrian LXX* have it, *they brought unto their Father an evil Report*, or *grievous Complaints against Joseph*, i. e. they begun their base and barbarous Treatment of him with Lies and Calumnies. However *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and the *Syriack* make *Joseph* the Accuser; but of what Crime it was, that he accused them to his Father, and whether it consisted in *Deeds*, or *Words* only, is a Subject that has occasioned a great Variety of Conjectures among *Criticks* and *Commentators*. Some will have it, that *Joseph* told of their Unkindness and Asperity to him; others, of their quarrelling, and contentious Way of living. Some, of their committing *Sodomy* or *Besiality*; while those, who confine it to *Words* only, suppose it to be passionate and undutiful Reflections, they might make upon their Father, for loving *Joseph* more than themselves. But, whatever it was, it may be gathered, from their propense Malice to him, that it was no small Crime, because that for his telling it (and which he might do with

A. M. 276, &c. Ant. Christ. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

ther perceiving, (in Hopes of mitigating their Resentment) * thought fit to discountenance him in the *Interpretation* of his Dreams, by telling him, that they were vain, and *chimerical*, and what could never come to pass; tho', in himself, he could not but think, that there was something extraordinary and *ominous* in them. His Brothers however, instead of abating their Hatred, grew, every Day, more and more exasperated; so that they resolved, at last, to cut him off, and only waited for a convenient Opportunity.

It happened, at this Time, that *Joseph's* ten Brethren (for *Benjamin* was, as yet, too young for any Business) were keeping their Flocks not far from *Shechem*, when their Father, not having heard from them for some Time, and † being not a little anxious for their Welfare, sent *Joseph* to find them out, and know how they did. As he drew near to *Shechem*, he was informed by a Person, whom he met with by Accident, that they had removed from thence, and were gone, about twenty Miles farther North, to a Place

no other Intent, but only that his Father's Rebukes and Admonitions might reform them) they hated him even unto Death. *Bibliotheca Bibl. and Howell's History.*

* *St. Chrysostom*, in his Homily upon the Place, has given us this farther Reason—— “ Besides, *says he*, he might think “ it convenient to give this calm Check to a Spirit so much “ elated, as this young Man must be by those great and certain Expectations, which God was pleased, in so extraordinary a Manner, to set before him. The Foreknowledge of “ all that Greatness and Glory, which was one Day infallibly “ to be his Portion, might have put him upon a wrong *Bias* “ of Behaviour; might have tempted him to *antedate* his Superiority; and fail, or waver, more or less, in his Duty to “ his elder Brethren, if not to his Father himself: and this “ seems to be the Meaning of *Jacob's* mentioning his Mother, “ who was dead, and did not so well comport with his “ Dream. But, at the same Time that in Prudence he was “ willing to prevent any vain aspiring Conceits, or Tumours “ in his Son, in *Faith* he was persuaded, that the Fact would “ prove such, as it was foretold.”

† The Reason of *Jacob's* Uneasiness, and of sending his Son *Joseph* upon this Errand, will be very obvious, if it be remembered that the Sons of *Jacob* had so incensed the neighbouring Places by the Massacre of the *Shechemites*, that *Jacob* was obliged immediately to quit the Country, for fear of a general Insurrection upon him, as we read *Gen. xxxiv. 30.*

Place called † *Dothan*. Thither *Joseph* went after them ; and no sooner did they see him approaching, but their old Malice revived, and immediately they resolved to make away with this *Master-dreamer*, (as they called him) and so persuade their Father that some wild Beast had devoured him.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

THIS Resolution, barbarous as it was, had certainly been put in Execution, † had not *Reuben*, who was the eldest, interposed, and dissuading them from imbruing their Hands in his Blood, advised rather to throw him into the next Pit, with a Design himself to draw him out privately, and convey him safe home to his Father. *Reuben's* Advice was liked : and therefore, as soon as *Joseph* came up to them, they immediately seized him, pulled off his fine Coat, and threw him into a Pit, which, at that Time,

N 2 chanced

† It was a Town about twelve Miles to the North of the City of *Samaria*, as *Eusebius* informs us. *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. I.

† He either thought himself most concerned to save his Brother, as being the First-Born, and therefore like to be the first in the Blame ; or he might hope, by thus piously and compassionately preserving the Favourite *Joseph*, to recover that Place in his Father's Affection, which he had lost by his Incest with *Bilhab*, his concubinary Wife. The Speech, which *Josephus* introduces him as making upon this Occasion, is very moving, and very rhetorical. It were an abominable Wickedness, says he, “ to take away the Life, even of a Stranger, but to destroy a Kinsman and a Brother, and, in that Brother, a Father and a Mother too, with Grief for the Loss of so good, and so hopeful a Son.—Bethink yourselves, if any Thing can be more diabolical. Consider that there is an all-seeing God, who will be the Avenger, as well as Witness of this horrid Murder. Bethink yourselves, I say, and repent of your barbarous Purpose. You must never expect to commit this flagitious Villany, and the divine Vengeance not overtake you ; for God's Providence is every where, in the Wilderness, as well as in the City, and the Horrors of a guilty Conscience will pursue you wherever you go. — But, put the Case your Brother had done you some Wrong ; yet is it not our Duty to pass over the Slips of our Friends ? When the Simplicity of his Youth may justly plead his Excuse, his Brothers certainly, of all Men living, should be his Friends and Guardians, rather than his Murderers ; especially when the Ground of all your Quarrel is this — That God loves your Brother, and your Brother loves God. *Josephus*, l. 2. c. 3.

A. M. 2276, &c. Ant. Christ. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

chanced to be dry; whereupon *Reuben* withdrew, to contrive some Means for rescuing his Brother, whilst the others (as if they had done some glorious Act) sat down to eat, and drink, and regale themselves.

IN the mean Time || a *Caravan* of *Ishmaelites*, who were travelling from Mount *Gilead* into *Egypt* with Spices and other Merchandize, appeared in Sight, which put *Judah* in the Thought of taking their Brother out of the Pit, and selling him to these Merchants, which wou'd every whit answer their Purpose as well, or better. The Proposal was no sooner made, than it was approved: *Joseph* was taken out of the Pit, was sold to the Merchants, and the Merchants sold him again to *Potiphar*, one of the King's chief Officers, and *Captain of his Guards*. *Reuben*, being absent while this was done, came to the Pit not long after, in order to rescue his Brother; but finding him not there, he began to bewail and lament himself to such a Degree, that his Brethren, to pacify his Grief, were forced to tell him, in what Manner they had disposed of him; whereupon *Reuben*, finding it impossible now to recover him, joined with them in contriving how to manage the Matter with their Father, so as to take off from themselves all Manner of Suspicion.

To this Purpose they killed a Kid, and dipping *Joseph's* Coat in the Blood of it, || sent it to their Father, as if they

|| Tho' we name the *Ishmaelites* only, yet here seem to be two, if not three Sorts of Merchants mentioned in this Passage, the *Ishmaelites*, the *Midianites*, and *Medanites* (as they are called in the *Hebrew*, Gen. xxxvii. 36.) who were a distinct People from the *Midianites*, as descended from *Medan*, one of *Abraham's* Sons by *Keturah*, and Brother to *Midian*, Gen. xxv. 2. But as they, and the *Midianites* lived near together in *Arabia*, not far from the *Ishmaelites*, they all joined together in this *Caravan*, and one Society of Merchants, as it is the Custom, even to this Day, in those *Eastern* Countries, for Merchants and others to travel through the *Desarts* in large Companies, for fear of wild Beasts or Robbers. *Patrick's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.

|| In one and the same Verse it is said, that they sent the Coat of many Colours, and they brought it to their Father: But this seeming *Solccism* is easily resolved, only by saying, that they sent it by the Hands of Persons, who brought it to their Father; or that they sent it by a Messenger, as being afraid to be present at the first Gust of their Father's Passion, and afterwards

they had found it in the Field, and were fearful that, it was their Brother's, Their Father soon perceived whose Coat it was; and, supposing that some wild Beast or other had slain his Son, † he rent his Cloaths, and put on Sackcloth, and began to mourn for his Death. In vain did the rest of his Children endeavour to comfort him; his Grief would admit of no Remedy; his Resolution was to † lament his Loss to the Hour of his Death; nor did he ever cease this disconsolate Way of Life, until he was told the surprizing News of *Joseph's* Advancement in *Egypt*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

FROM the Time that *Joseph* had Admission into *Potiphar's* Family, he shewed such Diligence and Fidelity, and prov'd so successful in every thing he undertook, that his

N 3

Master

wards brought or produced it, when one of them (as *Judah* is supposed to have been their *Spokesman*) related the Tale which follows: By which Artifice they seem'd to give themselves an Air of Compassion, since it was no uncommon Thing afterwards, (as in the Case of *Julius Cæsar*, and *Julia* his Daughter, the Wife of *Pompey*) on mournful Occasions, to produce such affecting Relicks and Remains. *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

† *Rending the Cloaths* was an Eastern Way of expressing either Grief for Calamity, or Horror for Sin. *Reuben* was the first, we read of, who, to denote his exceeding Sorrow, rent his Cloaths; and, as *Jacob*, we find, does the like, we may well suppose that it was an usual Manner of expressing all Grief and Uneasiness of Mind, in those Days; and, by putting on Sackcloth, (which *Jacob* is here the first Precedent of doing, but was afterwards commonly used upon all mournful Occasions) he seem'd to signify, that, since he had lost his beloved Son, he look'd upon himself as reduced to the meanest, and lowest Condition of Life. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* and *Howell's History*.

† *Jacob* expresses his Sorrow in these Words, — *I will go down unto the Grave unto my Son*. But if, by the Grave, we are here to understand a Place of Sepulture, how could *Jacob* say, that he would go down thither to his Son, when he presumes here, that he was not buried, but torn to Pieces by wild Beasts, To solve this Difficulty, some imagine, that the Particle *El* should not, in this Place, be render'd *to*, but (as it sometimes means) *for*, or *in the stead of*; and so the Sense is, *I will go down to the Grave, INSTEAD OF my Son*, who (unhappy Child as he was) had no Burial: But, since the Word *Scholab*, in Greek *ἀδης*, in Latin *Infernum*, signifies very frequently the State of the Dead in general, the much clearer Sense of the Words will be, — *I will not cease mourning until I die, and be laid in my Grave*. *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Master soon took Notice of him, and, in some Time, having made him his *Steward*, † put all his Affairs under his Management.

Is tempted
and accus'd
by Potiphar's
Wife.

IN this Condition, *Joseph* might have liv'd very happy, had it not been for an Adventure of a Nature somewhat singular. He was now in the † Bloom of his Youth, and of a Beauty and Comeliness so extraordinary, that his Master's Wife could not forbear conceiving an *irregular* Passion for him. Upon several Occasions, she had given him Indications enough of her ardent Desire to draw him into a wanton Familiarity with her, but he was *blind* to her Signs, and deaf to her soft Speeches; so that she was at last resolv'd to break through the Rules of her Sex, and court him in plain Terms. But how great was her Sur-
prize,

† The Words in the Text are, *he knew not aught he had, save the Bread, which he did eat*; which is one of the highest Expressions of Confidence, that we can imagine: For it signifies, that he was utterly careless about any Thing that concern'd his Estate, not minding what his Expence or Receipts were; but, taking his Ease, left all to *Joseph's* Honesty. In short, he thought of nothing, but only to enjoy what he had, without Care or Trouble. *Patrick's Commentary.*

† *Joseph*, at this Time, was about seven and twenty Years old. For he was seventeen, when he was sold to *Potiphar*, Gen. xxxvii. 2. and he was committed to Prison immediately, upon his Non-compliance with his Mistress's Temptation; where, (as far as it appears) he had not been long, before he interpreted the Dreams of the two disgrac'd Courtiers; and, two Years after that, he was releas'd and promoted, *viz.* when he was thirty Years old: So that we may reasonably conclude, that this Temptation beset him about three Years before his Release-ment, *i. e.* in the twenty-seventh Year of his Age. At this Time, it is supposable, that he was a comely Person enough, and the Saying is, that *honestia Forma muta Commendatio est*; but the Stories, relating to his excessive Beauty, as they are recorded by the *Talmudists*, are ridiculous, and not much better, than what *Mahomet*, in his History of the Patriarch, tells us, *viz.* That his Mistress, having invited the Ladies of the Town to a splendid Entertainment, order'd *Joseph* to be call'd for, but that, as soon as he appear'd, they were amaz'd at his Beauty, and so confounded, that they knew not what they did, but, instead of eating their Meat, they eat their Fingers, and said among themselves, *this is not a Man, but an Angel.* *Biblic-theca Bib.* in *Locum*, and *Alchoran*, Chap. of *Joseph*.

prize, when, instead of a ready Compliance, as she probably expected, she found herself not only denied, but severely reprimanded likewise for her disloyal Passion! Being willing however to hope that another Opportunity would prove more favourable, after several fruitless Attempts, she, at last, laid hold on *one*, when all the Family was abroad, and * accosted him in so violent and passionate a Manner, that she would not hear any farther Denial. In vain it was for him * to expostulate the Heinousness

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii to
the End.

N 4

* *Josephus* tells us, that *Potiphar's* Wife took the Opportunity of a certain *Festival*, when all the People were gone a Merry-making, to tempt *Joseph*; that, feigning herself sick, she decoy'd him, by that Means, into her Apartment, and then address'd herself to him in Words to this Effect. "It had been much better for you, *says she*, had you complied with my first Request; if for no other Consideration, in Regard, at least, to the Dignity of the Person who is become your Petitioner, and to the Excess of my Passion. Besides, it would have sav'd me the Shame of condescending to some Words and Expressions, which I am still out of Countenance, when I think of. ——— You might perhaps make some Doubt before, whether I was in earnest; but this is to satisfy you, that I mean no ill by my persisting in the same Mind. Take therefore your Choice now, whether you will improve this Opportunity of present Satisfaction, in the Embraces of a Creature, that loves you dearly, and from whom you may expect still greater Things; or stand the Shock of my Hatred and Revenge, if you will presume to value yourself upon the vain Conceit of your Chastity, more than my Favour, &c."

Antiq. l. 2. c. 4.

* *Josephus*, however, brings in his *Name-sake* expostulating the Matter with his Mistress, and reminding her of her Duty to herself, and her Husband, to Piety, and common Fame. "What signifies, *says he*, a momentary Pleasure, with a certain Repentance immediately to ensue; an Heaviness of Heart for a Thing once done, and an utter Impossibility of recalling and undoing it, together with perpetual Fears of Discovery and Disgrace? What does all this signify, *I say*, in Ballance of the most substantial Comforts, and the most necessary Duties of human Life? Whereas in a *conjugal* State, the self-same Delights are all free, safe, innocent, and warrantable both before God and Man. Consider again how it would lessen your Authority, to make your Servant your Equal by a shameful Participation in one common Crime; and, pray, is it not better to trust to a good Conscience, that fears no

"Light,

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728. &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

ousness of the Crime: Her Appetite was eager, and impatient; and therefore she caught him by the Cloak, and press'd him to lie with her; and he, having no other Way to escape, left his Cloak in her Hand, and fled.

WHETHER it was that she fear'd, by his Manner and Behaviour, that he might accuse her to her Husband, or that she was enraged at the Slight put upon her proffer'd Love; but so it was, that she resolv'd his immediate Ruin: And, accordingly, she began with * setting up a most horrid *Outcry*, which immediately brought in all, that were within hearing, and then shewing them *Joseph's* Cloak, (which she pretended he put off in order to lie with her) she told them, that he had made so furious an Attempt upon her Virtue, that nothing but her loud Cries could have sav'd her.

By the Time that her Husband came home, * she had dress'd up her Story so well, and express'd the pretended Indignity

“ Light, than to commit Wickedness in the Dark, and then
“ live all your Days in a restless Dread of being detected? &c.”
Antiq. ibid.

* There is something not unlike this revengeful Artifice in *Potiphar's* Wife, in the Representation, which the Poet makes of *Phædra*, when, in an Affair of the like Nature, she finds herself rejected by her Son-in-Law *Hippolytus*.

Regeramus ipsæ crimen, atque ultro impiam
Venerem arguamus, &c.
Adeste, *Athenæ*, fida famulorum manus,
Fer opem, &c.

————— En præceps abiit,
Ensemque trepidâ liquit attonitus fugâ,
Pignus tenemus sceleris, &c. Senec. Hip.

* Upon *Potiphar's* coming home, *Josephus* makes his Wife break out into these Words: “ You'll never deserve to live,
“ *Husband*, unless you make an Example of that perfidious
“ Wretch, your Man. He has forgotten what he was, when
“ you took him into your House, how kindly and respectfully
“ he has been treated here, to a Degree beyond his very Hope,
“ as well as his Desert. The Charge of your whole Family's
“ committed to him, the Command of the rest of your Servants,
“ and the Trust of all you have. What will you think of this
“ Fellow now, who, in Requital of all your Bounty, and good
“ Offices, could have the Impudence to attempt the Violation of
“ your Bed, and to take the Opportunity of this *Festival* Day,
“ when you were out of the Way, to break in upon my Pri-
“ vacy,

Indignity put upon her with such an Air of Resentment, that her *credulous* Husband, little suspecting his Wife's Treachery, was so prepossess'd with the Circumstance of the Cloak, that, without any farther Enquiry, † he hurried poor *Joseph* away, and clapp'd him up in the King's Prison: Where we shall leave him for a while, to take a View of what pass'd in his Father's Family.

† BEFORE the Time, that *Joseph* was sold into *Egypt*, A. M. 2276, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.
Judah, Thamar's Stratagem againſt her Father-in-law; Judah.

“ vacy, and preſs the Enjoyment of his beaſtly Ends. You have
 “ made him, in Effect, Maſter of all Things under your Roof;
 “ and would nothing ſerve him but he muſt have your Wife
 “ likewiſe? Here's the ungrateful Villain's Cloak, which, in
 “ his Fright, he left behind him, when I cried out, as he was
 “ going to *force* me.” Antiq. l. 2. c. 4.

† 'Tis ſomewhat wonderful, that, if *Potiphar* believ'd his Wife's Story, he did not immediately put him to Death; but there is one Thing which might check the Violence of his Paſſion, and that was, the great Opinion, he had for ſome Time been confirm'd in, of *Joseph's* Virtue and Integrity: *Joseph*, he ſaw, was young and beautiful, and therefore he might think it a Thing not impoſſible for a Lady of Diſtinction to be in Love with him, and upon a Diſappointment to be exaſperated: As therefore he would not inflict any *capital*, or corporal Punishment on him, ſo he thought it prudent to hurry him away, to Priſon unheard, leſt being allow'd to ſpeak in his own Vindication, he might clear himſelf, and thereby bring Diſcredit upon his Family. It muſt not be denied however (what *St. Chryſoſtom* has obſerv'd) that here again was a ſpecial, and, as it were, a miraculous Intervention of the divine Power, which preserv'd his Life, as it did before, when he was caſt into the Pit. The *ſuperior* Influence, which *ſoften'd* the Heart of *Reuben*, *reſtrain'd* the Hand of *Potiphar*, in order to make our *Patriarch* a more glorious Example, and to compleat theſe Events, in the Courſe of his Life, which God had predetermin'd and foretold. *Chryſ.* Hom. in Locum.

† Tho' the latter Part of *Judah's* Story, relating to the *Inceſt* with his Daughter *Thamar*, was acted after *Joseph* was ſold, and while he was in *Egypt*; yet the former Part of it, relating to his *Marriage*, and the Birth of his three Sons, muſt needs fall out before *Joseph* was ſold. For, ſince there were but two and twenty, or at the moſt, but three and twenty Years between *Joseph's* being ſold into *Egypt*, and *Jacob's* going down thither, it cou'd no ways be, that, in ſo ſhort a Space of Time, *Judah* cou'd marry a Wife, have three Sons at three ſeveral Times by her; marry two of her Sons ſucceſſively to one Woman; defer the Marriage of the
 Vol. II. third

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Judah, his Father's Son by *Leah*, had married † a *Canaanitish* Woman named *Shuah*, by whom he had three Sons, *Er*, *Onan*, and *Shelah*. *Er* being cut off for his Wickedness, before he had any Children by his Wife *Thamar*, *Judah* order'd his second Son *Onan*, (according to the Custom of the Country) to marry her, and † to raise a Posterity to his Brother. *Onan* seemingly obey'd his Father, but not brooking the Thought that any of his Children should inherit his Brother's Name who was dead, he took such a wicked and *unnatural* Way to prevent having any, that God was provok'd to punish him with sudden Death likewise. His third Son *Shelah* was not yet fit

third Son, to the same Woman, beyond the due Time ; afterwards, himself have Sons by the same Woman his Daughter-in-law ; and one of these Sons, *Pharez*, begat two Sons, *Hezron*, and *Hamul*, Gen. xvi. 12. It can no ways be, I say, that all these Transactions should be compris'd in so short a Time. And therefore we must suppose, that the Business of his being married, and having Children, was *prior* to *Joseph's* being sold ; but that *Moses*, not willing to intermingle the Story of the two Brothers too much, brings all he had to say concerning *Judah* into the Compass of one *Chapter*, and so concludes his Adventures, before he proceeds to those of *Joseph*. *Horwell's History*, l. 1. Universal History, l. 1. c. 7. and *Bibliotheca Bibl.* in *Locum*.

† It was not so bad for a Man *circumcis'd* to marry the Daughter of one *uncircumcis'd*, as it was for an *Israelite* to give a Daughter in Marriage to an *uncircumcis'd* Husband, Gen. xxxiv. 14. For an *uncircumcis'd* Man was accounted *unclean*, tho' he had renounc'd Idolatry ; but a Woman, born of *uncircumcis'd* Parents, if she embrac'd the Worship of the true God, was not so accounted. And such an one we may suppose *Judah's* Wife to have been ; otherwise he had offended his Father, as much as *Esau* did *Isaac* by marrying the Daughter of *Heth*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† This is the first Mention we have of this Custom, which nevertheless seems to have been a very common one, and well understood even by young *Onan* ; for he knew, that the first-born Child was not to be accounted *his*, but his deceas'd Brother's, was to be call'd by his Name, and inherit his Estate. For this, say the *Hebrew Doctors*, was an antient Custom, in Force, before the Law of *Moses*, that, when a Man died without Issue, his Brother should marry his Wife, and that the first Son, upon such Marriage, was to be reputed her deceas'd Husband's Heir. *Patrick's*, and *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

fit for Marriage; and therefore *Judah* desir'd his Daughter-in-law to retire to her Father's House, and there live a Widow, until he became adult, and then he would make him her Husband. *Thamar* did so, and waited till *Shelah* was come to Man's Estate; but finding no Performance of *Judah's* Promise, (as indeed he never heartily intended any) she was resolv'd to make herself amends some other Way, which she did by the following *Stratagem*.

JUDAH had lately buried his Wife; and, as soon as the usual Days of Mourning were over, he took a particular Friend with him, and went to *Timnah*, to divert himself a little at the *Shearing-Feast*. *Thamar* had Intelligence of this; and therefore, putting off her Widow's Weed, and dressing herself like a Courtesan, she threw a Veil over her Face, and planted herself between two Ways, where she knew her Father-in-law, in his Way to *Timnah*, was obliged to pass.

JUDAH no sooner saw her, but, taking her to be what she appear'd, he began to make his Addresses to her. What she insisted on was only a Reward for her Compliance, which he readily agreed to, and promised to send her a Kid: but she, having a farther Design upon him, demanded a Pledge for the Performance of his Promise, which was his *Signet*, his *Bracelet*, and his *Staff*; and so being agreed, they went together, had their Enjoyment, and she proved with Child.

JUDAH, according to his Promise, sent by his Friend *Hirah* (for that was his Name) a Kid to redeem his Pledge; but when *Hirah* came to the Place, the Woman was gone, nor could he find, upon his best Enquiry, that any such Person, as he described, had ever been there: So that *Judah*, when he told him his ill Success, thought it the wisest Way to let her go off with the Pledges, rather than run the Hazard of his Reputation, by making any farther Search.

ABOUT three Months after this, Word was brought him, that his Daughter-in-law had played the Harlot, and was certainly with Child. *Judah*, tho' glad perhaps at the News, because her Death would free him from the Promise of giving his Son *Shelah* to her, pretended however to be highly enrag'd at her Incontinency, and, ordering her to be brought forth, † condemn'd her to be burnt, according

† Among *Eastern* Nations, as well as elsewhere, Women, who were guilty of Adultery, were more severely punish'd, than the

A. M.
2276, &c..
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c..
From Gen.
xxxvii to
the End.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

according to the Laws of the Country. *Thamar*, instead of being surpriz'd at this dreadful Sentence pronounced against her, only sent the Pledges to *Judah*, with this Message, That the Owner of these Things was the Person, by whom she was with Child: Whereupon, struck with Confusion, and reflecting on the Injury, he had done her, in withholding his Son, he acknowledg'd her † less culpable in

the Men: Whether it was, that the Injury done the Husband was reputed to be more heinous, or that the Men, having the Power of making Laws, took care to enact them in Favour of themselves. Thus God is said, *for the Hardness of their Hearts*, to have indulg'd the *Jews* in the Matter of divorcing their Wives; but the Wives had not the like Privilege over their Husbands. In many Places a Man might have as many Wives as he could maintain; but the Women were to be content with one Husband: And, in like Manner, here *Judah*, we find, condemns *Thamar*, tho' a Widow, for her Crime, to be burnt; whilst himself, in the same State of Widowhood, thought Fornication a very pardonable Crime. It is question'd however, by what Right and Authority he could pass this Sentence upon her: And, to answer this, it is suppos'd, that every Master was Judge and chief Magistrate in his own Family; and that therefore *Thamar*, tho' she was a *Canaanite*, yet being married into *Judah's* Family, and having brought Disgrace upon it, was properly under his Cognizance. His Cognizance however (according to the Opinion of some) did not extend so far, as to have her burnt *at the Stake*, (as we call it) but only branded in the *Forehead* for a Whore; tho' others deny, that his Authority extended even so far: For, being in a strange Place, it can hardly be thought, that the Power of Life and Death, or indeed of any other Penalty, was lodg'd in him: And therefore they think, that the Words mean no more than this, — That she should be brought before a Court of *Judicature*, and sentenc'd according to the Laws of the Country. *Selden de Jure Nat. l. 7. c. 5. Le Clerc's and Patrick's Commentary, Hozev's, and Universal History.*

† The Words in the Text are, *She hath been more righteous, than I*: Not more *virtuous* or *chaste*, for she knowingly committed Adultery and Incest, when he designedly did neither; but more *just*, in that he, by withholding *Shelah* from her, had provok'd her to lay this Trap for him. So that, tho' *Thamar* was wickeder in the Sight of God, yet she may be said to be juster before *Judah*, or to have done no more, in drawing him into this *Scrape*, than what he justly deserv'd. *Pool's Annotations.*

in the whole Affair than himself, and, from that Moment; took her home to his House, but had never any more Communion with her.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

WHEN the Time of her Delivery was come, she was brought-to-bed of *Twins*, but the Manner of their Birth was somewhat surprizing: For, tho' one of them put forth his Hand, about which the Midwife tied a scarlet Thread, to distinguish him for the First-born; yet, as he withdrew it, his Brother got before him, and so came first into the World; which occasioned his Name to be *Phares*, i. e. one *breaking forth*, as the other with the Thread on his Hand was called *Zarah*.

To return to *Joseph*. He had not been long in Prison, before his virtuous and obliging Deportment gained him the Favour of the Keeper, insomuch that he was intrusted with the Management of the Affairs belonging to the Prison, and with the Custody of the Prisoners themselves.

AT this Time there were two Persons of Note, the King's Cup-bearer, and his chief Baker, for some Offence or other committed to the same Prison, where *Joseph* was; and, by the *Head-keeper*, entrusted to his Care and Attendance. To this purpose *Joseph* coming to their Apartment one Morning, and finding them both pensive and melancholy upon the Account of a *Dream*, which each of them had had the Night before, and under more Concern still, because, in that Place, they could have no Person to interpret for them; to allay their *superstitious* Humour in trusting to *Diviners* and *Soothsayers*, he told them, in the first Place, that the *Interpretation* of Dreams did not depend upon Rules of Art, but if there were any Certainty in it, must proceed from a *divine Inspiration*, and then desir'd to know what it was, that they dreamt.

Joseph interprets the Dreams of the King's Cup-bearer,

THE *Cup-bearer* began, and told him,——That, in his Sleep he fancied he saw a Vine, with three Branches, which, all on a sudden, *budded*, then *blossom'd*, and so bore ripe Grapes; and that he had in his Hand the King's Cup, into which having squeez'd the Juice of the Grapes, he gave it to the King, and the King drank it from his Hand as usual. To this *Joseph* replied, that, as the three Branches denoted three Days, it would not exceed the Compass of that Time, before the King, † having made an Enquiry into the Conduct

† The Expression, which *Joseph* here makes use of concerning the King's Cup-bearer and Baker, *Pharaoh shall lift up thy Head,*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

duct of his Servants, would restore him to his Favour, and his *Post* again. Only he desir'd, that, if his Interpretation prov'd true, he would, in his Prosperity, † be pleas'd to remember him, and to recommend his Case to the King; since the Truth was, that he had been fraudulently taken † from

Head, seems somewhat too literally translated, since the Words in the Original mean no more, than that *Pharaoh* would have them brought forth and examin'd. The Antients, we are to know, in keeping their Reckonings or Accounts of Time, or their List of domestick Officers or Servants, made use of Tables with Holes bored in them, in which they put a Sort of Pegs, or Nails with broad Heads, exhibiting the Particulars, either Number, or Name, or whatever it was. These Nails or Pegs the *Jews* call *Heads*, and the Sockets of the Heads they call *Bases*. The Meaning therefore of *Pharaoh's lifting up his Head* is, that *Pharaoh* would take out the Peg, which had the Cup-bearer's Name on the Top of it, to read it; *i. e.* would sit in Judgment, and make Examination into his Accounts. For it seems very probable, that both he, and the Baker had been either suspected or accused of having cheated the King, and that, when their Accounts were examin'd and cast up, the one was acquitted, while the other was found guilty. And tho' *Joseph* uses the same Expression in both Cases, yet we may observe, that, speaking to the Baker, he adds, that *Pharaoh shall lift up thy Head from off thee*, *i. e.* shall order thy Name to be struck out of the List of his Servants, by taking the Peg out of the Socket. *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

† There is nothing of a Distrust of God's Goodness, Justice, or Power, in making use of human Means. The Release of the King's Cup-bearer appear'd to *Joseph* to be a good Opportunity, pointed out by Providence, for him to lay hold on, and he would have been wanting to his own Preservation, had he not employed it. Though therefore it may be thought, that his asking this Court-Officer to represent his Case to the King, might be in Reward or Compensation for his Prediction; yet even herein he may be justified by *apostolical* Authority, which, in Cases of this Nature, instructs, (1 Cor. ix. 4. and Gal. vi. 6.) that temporal Advantages may very lawfully be both ask'd, and receiv'd. In the Cup-bearer's *not remembering* him however, we may observe something, that seems providentially to have turn'd to his Advantage, since, had he been discharg'd before *Pharaoh's* Dream, he might many Ways have mis'd of that prodigious Favour and Advancement, which, by this Means, he attain'd. *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

† The Words in the Text are, *from the Land of the Hebrews*, which some Men suppose were added by *Joshua*, or some other Writer,

CHAP. IV. from ABRAHAM'S Call, to the Israelites, &c. 223

from his own Country, and cast into Prison without any Fault or Offence of his. A. M. 2276, &c. Ant. Chris. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

† HEARING so happy an Interpretation of this Dream, the Baker was the readier to propose his, which was to this Effect.—That, while, as he thought, he had on his Head three *Wicker-Baskets*, in the uppermost of which were several Kinds of baked Meats for the King's Table, the Birds came, and eat them out of the Basket. To which *Joseph* immediately replied, that the three *Baskets* (even as the three *Branches* had done) signify'd three Days; but that, in the Space of that Time, the King, having made Scrutiny into his Behaviour, and found him guilty, would order him to be hanged upon a Gibbet, for the Fowls of the Air to devour his Flesh. And as *Joseph* foretold, so it came to pass: For, three Days after this, the *Cup-bearer* was restor'd, and the *Baker* hanged. The *Cup-bearer* however, when himself had got into Prosperity again, thought little of *Joseph*, till, in about two Years after this, an Accident happen'd, which forc'd him, in a Manner, to call him to Remembrance. Of his chief Baker,

THE King, his Master, had, in one Night, two very portentous Dreams, which gave him the more Uneasiness, because And those of the King himself.

Writer, after the Death of *Moses*; because, in *Moses's* Days, and much less in *Joseph's*, *Canaan* was not known by that Name. It is not the whole Land of *Canaan* however, that *Joseph* here means; but only that Part of it, which lay about *Hebron*, where *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, had, for a long while, liv'd, *Gen.* xxii. 1. 2. xxxv. 27. xxxvii. 14. 'Tis said indeed, that they were *Strangers* and *Sojourners* in the Country, but then they were *Strangers* of great Note and high Renown, who were treated as Princes, liv'd by their own Laws, and made Leagues not only with private Men, but with Cities, and with Kings, *Gen.* xxiii. 6. xxi. 22. xxvi. 28. xxxiv. 6. The Fame of whose Deeds could not but be spread abroad, both by the Victory, which *Abraham* got in a Battle over several Kings, and by the sacking of *Shechem*, which their Neighbours durst not revenge; all which might very well make that Part of the Country, wherein they, for three Generations, had resided, not improperly be call'd the *Land of the Hebrews*. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† As flush as the chief Baker was with Hopes, there is this obvious *Difference* between his, and the *Cup-bearer's* *Presage*, viz. that he was not an Agent, but a Sufferer in his Dream; for he did not give a Cake, or a Confection to the King, as the other did the Cup, but the Fowls of the Air descended upon his Basket, and fled off with the Dainties that were in it. *Patrick's Commentary*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

because none of the * *Egyptian Magi* could give him the least Light into their Meaning. Seeing the King therefore in this Perplexity, the Cup-bearer could not forbear telling him,—That, while he, and the chief Baker were under his Majesty's Displeasure in Prison, each of them, in the same Night, had a Dream, which a young Man, an *Hebrew*, then in Prison with them, interpreted exactly, and as the Event happened; and that, in his Opinion, he had a Talent that Way much superior to any, that had hitherto been consulted.

PLEASED with this Discovery, and eager to have his Dream explain'd, the King gave Orders immediately for *Joseph* to be sent for; who, after he had shaved, and dressed himself, was introduced into his Presence; where he had not been long, before the King related his Dreams to him, *viz.* "That, as he was walking on the Banks of the River " *Nile, as he thought,* he saw seven *fat* Kine, which fed " in the Meadows. And soon after that, seven others, exceeding *lean*, and frightful to behold, which came, and " eat up the *fat* ones, and yet looked not a Bit the better; " and that, after this, he dreamt again, and fancied that he " saw *seven* full Ears of Corn, proceeding all from the " same

* The *Chaldeans* of old were the most famous People in the World for Divination of all Kinds; and therefore 'tis very probable, that the Word *Hbartoumim*, which we render *Magicians*, is not of *Hebrew*, but *Chaldee* Origin. The Roots however, from whence it springs (if it be a compound Word, as probably it is) are not so visible; and therefore Commentators are perplex'd to know by what Method, Men of this Profession proceeded in their Enquiry into secret Things, whether they pretended to expound Dreams, and descry future Events, by natural Observations, by the Art of Astrology, (which came much in Request in future Ages) by such Rules, as are now found in the Books of *Oneirocriticks*, or by certain Characters, Images, Pictures, and Figures, which were engrav'd with magical Rites and Ceremonies. It is not to be doubted indeed, but that the *Magicians*, whom *Pharaoh* consulted for the Interpretation of his Dreams, made use of some at least, if not all these Arts; and the *Jewish* Doctors would make us believe, that, after several Attempts of divers Kinds, they came at last to this Exposition, that *Pharaoh's* Daughters (for they suppose him to have seven) should die, and that he should have seven others born to him in their Stead; but this being not at all satisfactory to their Master, put the Cup-bearer in Mind of *Joseph's* great Abilities that Way, *Le Clerc's*, and *Patrick's* Commentary.

“ same Stalk, which were, in like Manner, devour'd by
 “ seven others, that were blasted and wither'd.”

A. M.
 2276, &c.
 Ant. Chriſt.
 1728, &c.
 From Gen.
 xxxvii. to
 the End.

As ſoon as the King had ended, *Joſeph*, giving him firſt to underſtand, that it was † by the Aſſiſtance of God alone, that he was enabled to be an Interpreter of Dreams, told him, that the *ſeven Kine*, and *ſeven Ears* of Corn, ſignified the ſame Thing, and the Repetition of the Dream only denoted the Certainty of the Event; that, therefore, as the *lean Kine* ſeem'd to eat up the *fat*, and the *wither'd Ears* to conſume the *full* and flouriſhing; ſo, after ſeven Years of great Plenty, other ſeven Years of extreme Famine ſhould ſucceed, which would lay waſte all the Country, and leave no Signs of the former Plenty: And therefore, ſince it had pleaſed God thus to inform the King what Seaſons he intended to bring upon the Earth, he hop'd he would make a right Uſe of the Information, by appointing a wiſe and prudent Man over his whole Kingdom, who ſhou'd take care to build Granaries, and appoint Officers under him in every Province, who ſhou'd collect, and lay up †

a fifth

† The Words, wherein *Joſeph* prefaces his Interpretation of *Pharaoh's* Dreams, are much of the ſame Kind with what we find *Daniel* addreſſing *Nebuchadnezzar* upon the like Occaſion: *The Secret, which the King hath demanded, cannot the wiſe Men, the Aſtrologers, the Magicians, the Soothſayers ſhew unto the King; but there is a God in Heaven, who revealeth Secrets, and maketh known unto the King, what ſhall be in the latter Days*, Dan. ii. 27, 28. Both theſe holy Men inſinuate, that the Interests of Princes are more eſpecially the Care of divine Providence, and that therefore, for their Admonition, he frequently ſends Dreams and Viſions upon them. And this Declaration, previous to the Expoſition, was perfectly proper, and of mighty Force to beſpeak the King's Attention and Regard, at the ſame Time that *Joſeph* was aſſerting the Being and Interpoſition of Almighty God, in the Guidance of human Affairs. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum*.

† Since there were to be as many Years of Scarceneſs, as of Plenty, ſome have made it a Queſtion, why *Joſeph* advis'd no more than a fifth Part of the Corn, in plentiful Years, to be laid up: But to this it may be replied, that the greater and richer Sort were us'd, in Time of Plenty, to fill their Store-houſes with Proviſion, againſt a ſcarcer Year, which ſometimes happen'd; that, in the Times of Famine, Men were wont to live more frugally and parcimoniouſly, as the *Egyptians*, at this Time, according to *Joſephus*, were oblig'd to do by *Pharaoh's*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Whereupon
he is made
Vice-Roy,
or Prime-
Minister.

a *fifth* Part of each *plentiful* Year's Product, against the succeeding Years of *Famine*.

† THIS Interpretation, and the good Advice given upon it, made the King conceive so great an Opinion of *Joseph's* Wisdom, that he thought no one cou'd be so fit to manage the Office of collecting the Corn, in the Years of Plenty, as he, who had suggested a Scheme so very beneficial. He therefore, in a short Time, made him his *Deputy* over the Land of *Egypt*, and to that Purpose, invested him with the usual *Ensigns* of that Station. Gave him his own Signet from off his Finger; caus'd him to be cloath'd in a Robe of fine Linnen, and put a golden Chain about his Neck; order'd him to ride in a Chariot next to his own; and wherever he went, Heralds to go before, and, in Token that the *Viceroy* was coming, to proclaim to the People, †
bow

special Command; that, even in the Years of Famine, Tillage went on, and the Harvest might be something, (tho' not mention'd, by reason that the Product was comparatively inconsiderable) especially in the Lands lying near the *Nile*; and that as the tenth Part was an ordinary Tribute due to the Kings of *Egypt*, in the Years of extraordinary Plenty (when the *fifth* was no more than the *tenth* in other Years) *Pharaoh* might think it proper to double this Charge, or (what is rather to be suppos'd from a good King and a good Counsellor) to buy as much more, as was his Tribute, which he might do at an easy Rate, when such a vast Plenty made Corn extremely cheap. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Here we may observe again, that *Joseph* directs *Pharaoh* to look up to God, as the Author of all these Events, and that not in an ordinary, but extraordinary Manner, since such Fertility, and such Famine, did not proceed from mere natural Causes, but from an over-ruling Providence, which made the River *Nile* overflow its Banks so largely for seven Years together, and so occasion'd a great Plenty; and then, for the next seven Years, overflow very little, if at all, and so produce a very sore and long Famine. Nor can it be objected to *Joseph*, that he was guilty of Presumption or Boldness, in giving his Advice to *Pharaoh*, concerning the Provision that was to be made against the ensuing Scarceness, since he was conscious to himself, that he was best able to give such Advice, and would have been guilty of the Sin of Omission, had he neglected to do it, in so great and so general a Concern. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum*.

† *Annotators* are much at a loss to determine of what *Original* the Word *Abrech* is, some pretending that it is altogether *Hebrew*, while others make it a Compound of *Hebrew* and *Syriack*, and others

bow the Knee. Nor was this all: For, to attach him still closer to his Service, and make him forget the very Thoughts of ever returning to his own Country, † he chang'd his

O 2

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

others contend, at the same Time, that it is purely *Egyptian*. Those, who pretend that it is *Hebrew*, besides the Signification of *bowing the Knee*, (which it very well bears) by dividing it into two Words, make it import a *tender Father*, and suppose, that *Joseph* might very properly be called a *Father*, in Point of his consummate Wisdom, and young or *tender*, in Regard to his Years. Those, who make it a Mixture of *Hebrew* and *Syriack*, divide it, in like Manner, into two Words, and suppose that, as *Ab*, in the *Hebrew*, is *Father*, so *rech* or *rach*, in the *Syrian* Tongue, is *King*, in the same Sense, that *Joseph* says of himself, and (perhaps with Allusion to this very Name) *God has made me a Father unto Pharaoh*, Gen. xlv. 8. i. e. in giving him wholesome Counsel, even as a Father does his Children: But those, who contend for its being purely *Egyptian*, do freely confess, that, at this Distance of Time, and under such *Obsolescence* of that Language, 'tis next to impossible to find out the genuine Signification of an *honorary* Term, (as this very probably was) and therefore they observe, that, as the *Jewish* Historian makes no Mention of this Circumstance in *Joseph's* Story, he might be induc'd to that Omission, by reason of his not understanding this Word of *exotick* Growth. In this Uncertainty of Opinions therefore, we have thought it the best Way to follow that Translation, which some of the best *Hebrew* Interpreters, the *Septuagint*, and *Vulgate* Versions, have approv'd. *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 20.

† It was an antient Custom among *Eastern* Princes, upon their Promotion of any Favourite, to give him a new Name. *Nebuchadnezzar*, we read, Dan. i. 7. impos'd new Names upon *Daniel*, and his Companions in *Babylon*; and, to this very Day, the *Mogul* never advances a Man, but he gives him a new Name, and that significative of something belonging to him: But here the Question is, what the Meaning of the Name, which *Pharaoh* gave *Joseph*, is? In the *Hebrew* Text it is *Zaphnah paaneah*, but, in the *Egyptian* and *Greek Pentateuch*, it is *Pson-thonphanech*. The oriental Versions, however, are pretty unanimous in rendering it, a *Revealer of Secrets*; but there are some Reasons, why this should not be its true Interpretation. For, the Time, when *Pharaoh* gave the Patriarch this Name, was when he advanc'd him, from the Condition of an imprison'd Slave, to that of a *Ruler throughout all the Land of Egypt*; and therefore it is reasonable to suppose, that he gave it in Commemoration of such Promotion, rather than of his expounding Dreams; because, to have

A. M. 2176, &c.
Ant. Chrii. 1728, &c.
From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

Name to that of *Zaphnah-paaneab*, which signifies a *Prime-minister*, and match'd him into a noble Family, to *Asenah*, the Daughter of † *Potipherah*, Priest, or Prince of *On*; by whom he had two Sons, the former of which he call'd *Manasseh*, intimating, that God had made him forget all his Toils; and the other *Ephraim*, because he had made him fruitful in the Land of his Affliction.

IN the mean Time, *Joseph* being now about thirty Years old, when he was rais'd to this Height of Power, took a Progress through the whole Kingdom; built Granaries, appointed proper Officers in every Place, and, in short, order'd all Things with such Prudence and Application, that, before the seven Years of Plenty were expir'd, he had amass'd together an immense Quantity of Corn, enough to supply both *Egypt* and the neighbouring Countries; so that when the Years of Famine came on, and the People apply'd themselves to *Pharaoh*, he remitted them to *Joseph*, who, when he saw it fit, open'd his Stores, and sold Provision to all that came.

His wise Management.

IN the second Year of the Famine, *Jacob*, who was not exempt from the common Calamity, hearing that there was Corn to be bought in *Egypt*, sent ten of his Sons thither to buy some; who, upon their Arrival, were directed to apply to *Joseph* for an Order, and, as soon as they saw him, prostrated

have call'd him an *Interpreter of Dreams* only, had been degrading him to the Level of *Magicians*. Now if *Pharaoh* gave him this Name in Memory of his Promotion, it is very likely, that this Name was strictly and properly *Egyptian*, (otherwise the common People could not have understood it) tho' *Moses*, in his recording it, might endeavour to accommodate it to the *Hebrew* Idiom; and if it was *Egyptian*, the Word in that Language signifies, what we call, a *Prime Minister*; or, strictly, the *first*, or *Prince of the Lords*. *Bibliotheca Bibl. Occas. Annot.* 41.

† The Reader must remember not to confound *this* Name with *Potiphar*, who bought *Joseph* of the *Ismaelites*, because their Names in *Hebrew* are not differently written. The one, however, is call'd the *Captain of the Guards*, the other the *Prince*, or *Priest of On*; so that the former must have had his Residence in the Capital, to be always about the King; but the latter liv'd at *On*, or *Heliopolis*, about twenty Miles distant from *Memphis*, the *Metropolis of the Kingdom*: Nor can we suppose, that *Joseph* would ever have married his Master's Daughter, lest he should have prov'd not unlike her Mother, for whose Incontinence he had so severely smarted. *Universal History*, l. 1. c. 7.

prostrated themselves before him, and begg'd that they might be supply'd with Corn.

JOSEPH, at first Sight, knew his Brethren, but, being minded to terrify them a little, would not, as yet, discover himself to them; and therefore, chusing to speak by an Interpreter, with a severe Look and angry Tone, he ask'd them, whence they came, and, upon their answering, from the Land of *Canaan*, he charg'd them with being * *Spies*, who were come to discover the Weakness of the Country. To which they replying, that they came with no other Intent, than purely to buy Corn for their numerous Family, being all the † Sons of one Man, who once indeed had twelve, but that the youngest was left at home, and the next to him dead; he immediately catch'd at their Words, and put their Honesty upon this Probation:—That, since, *as they said*, they had a younger Brother, some one of them should be dispatch'd to bring him, whilst the rest were kept in Custody; otherwise he should look upon them, (and there he spake with a seeming Earnestness) as no other, than *Spies* and Enemies; and so order'd them all to Prison, until they should come to a Resolution.

AFTER three Days Confinement however, he sent for them again, and then, with a milder Air, told them, that as himself *fear'd God*, and was willing to act justly by them, he was loath that their Family should want Provision, or

O 3

that

* These Words, *Ye are Spies*, are not to be look'd upon as a *Lye*, because they are not spoken by Way of Affirmation, but of Probation only, in the Manner that Judges speak, when they examine suspected Persons, or enquire into a Crime, of which Men are accus'd; and have therefore the Force of an Interrogation, *Are ye not Spies?* or, I must take you to be such, until you prove the contrary. This, though it was but a pretensive Charge of *Joseph*, had yet the better Colour, because *Egypt* was defenceless, and liable to Incursions only on that Side, from whence his Brethren came; for, what with the Interposition of large Desarts, and shallow Seas, it was pretty well secur'd on all other Quarters. *Le Clerc's*, and *Patrick's* Commentaries in Locum.

† By this they suggested the Impossibility of their being *Spies*, since no Man, in his Wits, would send so many, and all his own Sons, upon so dangerous and capital an Enterprize: Nor was it probable, that one Man could have a Design upon *Egypt*, but all the great Men in *Canaan* must have join'd in it, and then they would have sent Men of different Families, and not all of one only. *Patrick's* Commentary.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

And Treatment
of his
Brethren,
when they
came to buy
Corn.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

that they themſelves ſhould ſuffer, if innocent; he therefore propounded this Expedient to them: —“ That one of them ſhould be confin’d, as an *Hoſtage* for the reſt, while they return’d with Corn for the Family; and that, when they came again, and brought their youngeſt Brother with them, the *Confin’d* ſhould be releas’d, and all of them reputed *honest Men*.”

FOR Perſons in their Circumſtances there was no expoſtulating with one, who had them at his *Mercy*; and therefore they conſented to do whatever he requir’d. But, in the *Interpreter’s* Abſence, they, ſuppoſing that no one elſe underſtood their Language, began to bewail their unrelenting Cruelty to poor *Joſeph*, and to condemn themſelves ſeverely for it; while *Reuben* (who was not ſo culpable in the Matter) put them in Mind, that all this Miſchief might have been prevented, had they liſten’d to his Counſel, and not acted ſo inhumanly to their innocent Brother, for whoſe Sake, it was no more, than what they might expect, that Vengeance, at one Time or other, would certainly overtake them.

THEIR Diſcourſe, in ſhort, was ſo very dolorous and affecting, that *Joſeph* could no longer contain himſelf, and was therefore forc’d to withdraw a little, to give his Tears vent, and then coming in again, commanded † *Simeon* to be bound, and ſent to Priſon: But, ſetting the reſt at Liberty, he order’d the Officer, who diſtributed the Corn, to ſupply them with what they wanted, and, at the ſame Time (as

† It may be ſuppos’d perhaps, that, becauſe *Reuben* was the eldeſt, he, upon this Occaſion, had been the propereſt Hoſtage: But *Reuben*, we may obſerve, had ſhew’d himſelf averſe to thoſe Lengths of Wickedneſs and Inhumanity (in which moſt of the other Brothers were agreed) againſt *Joſeph*. *Reuben*, in ſhort, reſolv’d to ſave him; and, as *Judah* was inclin’d to favour him, had *Simeon* join’d with them, their Authority might have prevail’d for his Deliverance: But *Simeon* was the Perſon, who was moſt exaſperated againſt him. He was the eldeſt of thoſe, who had propos’d to murder him, and was therefore a *fit Proxy* for the reſt; the Man (as the *Hebrews* ſay) who put *Joſeph* in the Pit, and was now very juſtly to be ſerv’d in his Kind: Tho’ they, who tell us this, have a Tradition, that, as ſoon as his Brothers were gone, *Joſeph* had him unbound, and order’d him what Proviſions, and Conveniences he pleas’d, during his Confinement. *Patrick’s* Commentary, and *Bibliotheca Bibl.* in *Locum*.

(as a fresh Matter for their Surprize) † to put each Man's Money into the Mouth of his Sack. His Orders were accordingly obey'd: And therefore, when they came to bait, and to give their Beasts Provender †, they were not a little frighten'd to find their Money return'd; nor fail'd they to make all the dismal Reflections hereupon, that their Fears cou'd suggest, concluding that the haughty *Viceroy* had done this, that he might have a Pretence to make them his Slaves, at their next coming down.

As soon as they were got home, they acquainted their Father with all these Adventures; they told him the Treatment, they had receiv'd from the King's *Prime-Minister*, and how he suspected them of being *Spies*, of which they had no Way to clear themselves, but by leaving *Simeon* bound in Prison, as a *Pledge*, till they shou'd bring *Benjamin*, to shew that what they told him of their Family was true. These were sad *Tydings* indeed, and what made their poor afflicted Father break out into this melancholy Complaint; "That, one Way or other, him they had deprived of his Children; that *Joseph* was dead, *Simeon* was left in *Egypt*, and now they were going to take *Benjamin* from him likewise, which were Things too heavy for him to bear."

O 4

IN

† This *Joseph* might do, without defrauding *Pharaoh*: For, he might either supply them out of that Stock of Provisions, which belong'd properly to himself; or, if the Provisions were the King's, he might pay for them out of his own Purse. Nor is there any Occasion to conceive, that a Person, so entirely in Favour and Confidence with his Prince, as *Joseph* was, had his Hands tied up from disposing, at his own Discretion and Pleasure, of so small a Boon, as this, to his Friends, for their Relief and Comfort. *Musculus.*

† If it should be made a Question, why *Joseph's* Brethren made Use of their own Stocks, and especially in a Time of so great Scarcity, in a *publick Inn*; the Answer is obvious:—That the Inns, or Resting-places, in those Parts of the World, neither were, nor are as yet, such as we meet with in *England*, and some other Parts of *Europe*. They afforded no Accommodation of any Kind, but barely House-room. The Passengers, who travell'd in those Countries, carry'd most, if not all, of their Provisions with them; nor did they make any other Use of these *Publick-houses*, but only to repose themselves in, at the End of their Stages. *Musculus.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

A M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1723, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

IN vain it was for *Reuben*, in order to prevail with his Father to comply, to offer, (as he did) that, if he did not return him ſafe, he might take his two Sons, and kill them, if he pleas'd: The *Death* of a Grandſon was no Compensation for the *Loſs* of a Child; and therefore, inſtead of aſſwaging, this did but augment his Grief, and make him abſolutely reſolve not to truſt *Benjamin* with them; for *his Brother is dead*, ſays he, *and he is left alone; if any Miſchief ſhould befall him by the Way, then will ye bring my grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave.*

IN ſuch Debates as theſe they ſpent the Time, till the Famine every Day increaſing, and their Stock of Proviſion being well nigh gone, *Neceſſity* put them in the Thoughts of going down again into *Egypt*. This their Father likewiſe reminded them of, but without taking any Notice of their Obligation to the *Viceroy* to bring their younger Brother with them; which when *Judah* ſuggeſted to him, and ſet before him, withal, the utter Impoſſibility of their going into *Egypt*, without his complying with that *Condition*, he began to complain again, that he thought himſelf hardly uſ'd in their telling the *Viceroy* any Thing of the State of his Family, or that they had another Brother; which *Judah* endeavour'd to excuſe, by aſſuring his Father, that, what was ſaid upon that Head, proceeded from the Simplicity of their Hearts, and in Answer to the *Interrogatories*, which the *Viceroy* put to them, without ever dreaming that he intended to make ſuch a cruel Handle of it; and then, perceiving his Father to waver a little in his Reſolution, † he reiterates

† In the Text, the Words, wherein *Judah* delivers himſelf to his Father, are theſe——*If thou wilt ſend our Brother with us, we will go down and buy thee Food, but if thou wilt not ſend him, we will not go down.* Gen. xliii. 4, 5, which, at firſt View, ſeems to have an Air of *Undutiſulneſs* in them, but, upon a nearer Inſpection, will admit of this Apology, *viz.* That this was not the firſt Propoſal made to *Jacob* by his Sons, to have *Benjamin* go with them into *Egypt*. *Reuben* had once before offer'd his two Sons for Pledges, and receiv'd a Repulſe. Upon *Jacob's* renewing his Orders therefore for them to go, *Judah* only had Courage to engage in this freſh Remonſtrance. He reminds his Father, firſt of the Solemnity and Earneſtneſs, with which *Joſeph* had pretended, that, without *Benjamin*, *they ſhou'd not ſee his Face*: Then he offers to go very willingly in Obedience to his Father's Command, but deſires to inſiſt upon the Condition of *Benjamin's* going with them, as finally, indiſpenſably,

reiterates the Necessity of their going again, and presses him to consent, with this solemn Promise, that, at the Hazard of his own Life, he would take care, and return him safe: (a) *Of my Hand shalt thou require him, says he; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the Blame for ever.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

BUT it was not so much his Son's Importunity, as the Necessity of Affairs, which induc'd *Jacob* to comply, and therefore, perceiving that there was now no Remedy, he deliver'd up *Benjamin*; but, before they departed, instructed them what to do, *viz.* to take a double Quantity of Money with them, for fear that there was some Mistake made in the other, that was return'd, ‡ and some such Presents, as the Country afforded, and what, *they imagin'd*, would be most acceptable to the Viceroy: And so, having intreated Heaven for their Success, he sent them away, with an aking Heart, but a resolv'd Acquiescence in God's good Providence, let the Event be what it wou'd.

As soon as they arriv'd at *Egypt*, they went directly to *Joseph's* the King's Granaries, and presented themselves before *Joseph*, who, seeing their Brother *Benjamin* with them, gave Orders to his Steward to conduct them to his House, where he design'd they should dine that Day. Here again they began

sably, and absolutely necessary. For the Words, compar'd with those of *Gen. xlv. 26.* do plainly denote as much, *we will not go down*, i. e. it is impossible, impracticable, unallowable for us to go. For the *future* Tense, according to the *Hebrew* Idiom, will bear this signification, and consequently will acquit *Judab* from all Suspicion of Rebellion, or Undutifulness towards his Father. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on *Gen. Annot.* 45.

(a) *Gen. xliii. 9.*

‡ The Present, which *Jacob* order'd his Sons to carry down to *Joseph*, is thus particulariz'd in our Translation; *a little Balm, a little Honey, Spices, and Myrrh, Nuts and Almonds*, *Gen. xliii. 11.* But there is Reason to suspect, that some of these are not the real Things, which the original Words intend. *Balm* indeed (which we may suppose was that of *Gilead*) was of great Price all the World over, and a small Quantity of it was a Present worth Acceptance; but unless the *Honey* in *Canaan* was better than ordinary, there doubtless was no Want of it in *Egypt*: And therefore it is much more likely, that this Part of the Present consisted of *Dates*, since the *Hebrew* expresses both by the same Name, and, in *Judea*, especially about *Jericho*, (as both *Josephus*, and *Pliny* tell us) there was great Plenty of them.

A. M. 2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif. 1728, &c.
From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

began to fear, left this might be a Contrivance againſt them upon Account of the Money, which was return'd in their Sacks; and therefore, before they enter'd the Houſe, they acquainted the Steward with the whole Affair; and, to demonſtrate their Honeſty, told him, that, beſides the Money, which they found return'd, they had brought more along with them, to buy a freſh Quantity of Proviſion.

THE Steward, on the other Hand, being let into the Secret, and perceiving the Concern they were in, bad them diſmiſs all uneaſy Apprehenſions; told them, that what they found in their Sacks, they ought to look upon as a Treafure, ſent them from Heaven; own'd that he himſelf had fairly receiv'd their Money, and gave them Aſſurance, that they ſhould never hear any more of it; and (that they might believe his Words to be true) he went, and brought *Simeon* unbound to them; acquainted them that they were to dine with his Lord that Day; and ſhew'd them, in the mean while, all the Tokens of Civility, that were fitting for welcome Gueſts.

JOSEPH was to return by Noon, and therefore his Brothers took Care to have their Preſent in Readineſs; and, when he was come, introduc'd it in the handſomeſt, and moſt ſubmiſſive Manner, they could. He receiv'd them all with a friendly Countenance; enquir'd much concerning the Health and Welfare of their aged Father; and then, turning to *Benjamin*, ask'd them, if he was the younger Brother, they had mention'd to him; and, without ſtaying for their Answer, ſaluted him in theſe Words, *God be gracious to thee, my Son*. But, finding his Affections begin to work, and fearing left he ſhou'd diſcover himſelf too ſoon, he retir'd into his Chamber, and there vented his Paſſion in a Flood of Tears; which when he had done, he waſh'd his Face, and return'd to the Company, and order'd the Dinner to be ſerv'd up.

THREE Tables were ſpread in a large *Dining-room*; one for himſelf alone, by Reaſon of his Dignity; another for his *Egyptian*

them. The Word *Nekoth*, which is render'd *Spices*, ſhould rather ſignify *Storax*, which is an *aromatick* Gum, put into all precious ſpicy Ointments: And the Word *Loth*, which is tranſlated *Myrrh*, would come nearer the Original, if it were call'd *Laud-anum*. *Botnim*, which we read *Nuts*, are what we call *Piſtachoes*, which were highly eſteem'd by the Antients, as a delicious Food; and with theſe Almonds perhaps might not improperly be join'd together. *Univerſal Hiſtory*, and *Patrick's Commentary*.

Egyptian Guests, * who hate to eat with People of a different Nation; and a third for his Brethren, who were amaz'd to find themselves plac'd in exact Order, according to their Seniority, and did not a little wonder what this unexpected Civility might end in.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

JOSEPH however, during the whole Entertainment, behav'd very courteously. From his own Table † he sent Dishes to every one of his Brothers, but to *Benjamin* he sent five Dishes for each of their one; which was another Mystery, they could not unriddle; however, for the present, they were very chearful and merry.

AFTER they had eat, and drank very plentifully, they began to think of taking their Leave, and of going about the Affair, for which they came; but *Joseph* had one Fright more in reserve for them, and therefore he order'd his Steward, when he fill'd their Sacks with Corn, to return their Money (as he had done before) but, into *Benjamin's* Sack, not

* The Reason, which some assign for the *Egyptians* refusing to eat with the *Hebrews*, was their sacrificing some Creatures, which the *Egyptians* worshipp'd: But, tho', in after Ages, they certainly did worship several Kinds of Animals, yet there appears nothing from the Story, that they did so in *Joseph's* Days; for their Worship of the famous Ox, call'd *Apis*, was a much later Invention, as many learned Men have demonstrated. It is much more likely therefore, that this great Abhorrence should be resolv'd into their different Manner, both of dressing, and eating their Victuals. No People, as *Herodotus* tells, [even where he treats of their Manner of Feasting, *Euterpe* c. 28.] were more tenacious of their old Customs, than the *Egyptians*. They would not use those of any other Nation whatever; and therefore the *Hebrews* were not the only People, they had an Aversion to. For (as the same Historian informs us) an *Egyptian* Man, or Woman, wou'd not kiss the Mouth of a *Greek*; would not make use of a Spit, or a Pot belonging to them; nor eat any Meat, that was cut with one of their Knives. *Patrick's*, and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† The Manner of eating among the Antients, was not for all the Company to eat out of one and the same Dish, but for every one to have one or more Dishes to himself. The whole of these Dishes were set before the *Master of the Feast*, and he distributed to every one his Portion. As *Joseph* however is here said to have had a Table to himself, we may suppose, that he had a great Variety of little Dishes, or Plates set before him; and, as it was a Custom for great Men to honour those, who were in their Favour, by sending such Dishes to them, as were first

serv'd

A. M.
2276, *Ec.*
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, *Ec.*
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

not only to put his Money, but the Silver Cup likewise, wherein he himself us'd to drink, and, after they were gone a little Way out of Town, to go, and overtake them, and charge them with *Felony*.

THE Steward did as he was commanded: And, when he came up with *Joseph's* Brethren, upbraided them with Ingratitude, in so badly requiting his Lord's *Civility*, as to steal away his Cup. Conscious of their own Innocence, and disdainful of so vile a Charge, they put the Matter upon this short Issue:——That, whoever, upon Search, should be found to have the Cup, should be given up to suffer Death, and themselves become all his Lord's Bond-Slaves. So said, so done: The Beasts were unloaded: The Sacks were search'd: And, to their great Astonishment and Surprise, the Cup was found in *Benjamin's*. To no Purpose it was for the poor Youth to say any Thing in his own Defence: Upon such a Demonstration none would believe him: And yet, being all concern'd in the Disgrace, they loaded their Asses again, and, in a mournful Manner, returned to the City.

JOSEPH was at home, expecting their Return, and when they came before him, reprimanded them very sharply, while they lay prostrate at his Feet, and † acknowledg'd their Guilt; but, in the Conclusion of his Speech, he assur'd them, that the Person only, who was detected in the Theft, should remain a Slave: the rest might return home, when they pleas'd, to their Father.

JUDAH, who had taken *Benjamin* under his Care, being, by this Time, recover'd from his Surprise, drew near, and address'd *Joseph* in the most submissive and pathetic Terms. He acquainted him with the whole Case between them, and their Father, in Relation to their bringing *Benjamin* into *Egypt*, to take away the Suspicion of their being *Spies*.

serv'd up to themselves, *Joseph* shew'd that Token of Respect to his Brethren: But, to express a particular Value for *Benjamin*, he sent him five Dishes to their one, which Disproportion cou'd not but be marvellous and astonishing to them, if what *Herodotus* tells us be true, l. 6. c. 27. viz. “that the Distinction “in this Case, even to *Egyptian* Kings themselves, in all” publick Feasts and Banquets, was no more than a double *Mess*.” *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

† *Judah*, in Behalf of himself, and his Brethren, might very well have pleaded in Defence, that they receiv'd their Sacks from the Officer, tied up as they were, without ever once opening them; and that the same Hand, which now, for these two Times,

Spies. He describ'd very passionately their Father's melancholy Condition for the Loss of his Son *Joseph*; the extreme Fondness he had for his Son *Benjamin*; the Difficulty they were under, to prevail with him to trust him with them, so that he himself was forc'd to become Security for his safe Return; and that, if he should go home without him, his Father's Life was so wrapt up in the Child, that he would certainly die with Grief. Rather therefore than see this Grief of his aged Father, and his grey Hairs with Sorrow descending to the Grave, he offer'd himself an *Equivalent* for his Brother: (*b*) *Now, therefore, I beseech thee, my Lord, let me, thy Servant, abide here a Slave, instead of the Lad, and let him go up with his Brethren; for how shall I see my Father without him?* This moving Speech, and generous Offer, were what *Joseph's* Soul could not withstand, and therefore, being able to contain himself no longer, he order'd all the Company to leave the Room, that he might have a more affectionate Freedom in discovering himself to his Brethren.

BUT, no sooner had he told them, that he was *Joseph* their Brother (which was all that his full Heart would let him utter) than, reflecting upon what they had once done to him, they were all struck with such a Surprise and Confusion, that, for a long Time, they could make him no Answer.

As soon however, as he had recover'd himself, he desir'd them to draw near unto him; he embrac'd them all round with an unfeign'd Tenderness; and, to dispel all farther Apprehensions, told them, that their selling him into *Egypt* was directed by an unforeseen Providence; that therefore they had no Reason to be angry with themselves, for doing it, since they were no more than the *Instruments* in God's Hand, to bring about what his eternal Purpose had determin'd; that he had no Reason to resent it, since, by that Means, he had been advanc'd to the Honour and Dignity of being Governor of all *Egypt*; nor his Father, or any of his Family to murmur at it, since God had appointed this Method for the

Times, had return'd their Money, was the most likely to have convey'd the Cup into them: But since there was a manifest Juggle in the Thing, he was fearful of irritating the Governor, if he should go about to detect it, and therefore he thought that the best Way, for him and his Brethren to escape, was to acknowledge the Crime, though they were innocent of it, and (as if they had no Perception of the Trick, that was put upon them) to implore his Pity and Compassion, by Arguments taken from other Topicks. *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

(*b*) Gen. xlv. 33, 34.

A. M. 2276, &c.
Ant. Chris. 1728, &c.
From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

the Preservation of their Lives. For five Years more, *he told them*, there were to be of the Famine; and therefore he bid them hasten into *Canaan*, and tell his Father of all his Glory and Greatness, and desire him to come down, that he might take Care of him, and feed him in this Time of *Dearth*, and provide him with a Country, (even *the Land of Goshen*) not far distant from him, and very commodious for such, as led a *pastoral* Life. All this, he own'd, would be strange and surprizing for them to tell; but their Father would hardly doubt the Testimony of so many *Eye-witnesses*; above all, he would not fail to believe what his Favourite *Benjamin* told him: And, with that, he threw himself upon *Benjamin's* Neck, kiss'd him, and wept over him for Joy; and having treated all the rest in the same kind Manner, and as a Person, that was perfectly reconcil'd to them, they began to take Courage, and convers'd more familiarly with him.

A RUMOUR, in the mean Time, was spread thro' the Court, that *Joseph's* Brethren were come to buy Corn, which, when *Pharaoh* heard, he sent for him, and told him, that since his Father's Family was so numerous, and the Famine, as yet, not half over, his best Way would be to send for them, and place them in what Part of the Country, he thought fit; for that they should never want Provisions, or any other Favour, that he could shew them. He put him in Mind likewise to send them a fresh Supply of Corn, and whatever else he thought would be necessary in their Journey, with Chariots and Waggon, to bring down their Wives and Children, and the best of their *Movables*.

JOSEPH gladly obey'd the King's Command: And (besides the Chariots and Provisions) sent to his Father ten Asses, laden with the choicest Commodities of *Egypt*; to his Brethren he gave each of them Changes of Garments, but to *Benjamin* he gave *five*, with three hundred Pieces of Silver; and so dismiss'd them with this kind Charge, that they should not *fall out by the Way*. With Hearts full of Joy they proceeded in their Journey to *Canaan*, and were gladly receiv'd by their good old Father, especially upon the Return of his two Sons, *Simeon* and *Benjamin*, whom he scarce expected to have seen any more. But when they inform'd him, that his Son *Joseph* was likewise alive, and in what Pomp and Splendor he liv'd; that he was the very Man, the King's *Prime-Minister* and Governor of *Egypt*, who had put them into so many deadly Frights; being not able to bear so much good News at once, he *fainted* away in their Arms: But when he came to himself again, and they shew'd him the Presents,

Their Account of all this to their Father Jacob.



A MAP
of Ancient
EGYPT
from Celarius

MARMA =
Marmaridæ
RICA

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

ARABIA
PETRÆA

HEP =
Heliopolis

AETHIOPIÆ
PARS

PALESTINE
PARS



Presents, which *Joseph* had sent, and the Chariots and Carriages, which were come to take him, and his Goods away, his Spirits reviv'd, his Doubts and his Fears vanish'd, and, in an Extasy of Joy, he cry'd out, (c) *It is enough! Joseph, my Son, is yet alive; I will go and see him, before I die.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

To see so dear a Son, for whom he had mourn'd so long, in all his *Egyptian* State and Glory, was enough to make him hasten his Journey; but, as his Gratitude to God, for all his late Mercies vouchsaf'd unto him, and his farther Want of the divine Protection, to accompany him into *Egypt*, requir'd some fresh Act of Religion from him, he chose to go to *Beer-sheba*, and there offer some Sacrifices, both because it was the Place, where *Abraham* and *Isaac* had liv'd so long, and because it was in the Way to *Egypt*, as being the utmost Boundary of *Canaan* towards the *South*.

HERE it was that God appear'd to him again in a Vision; *Jacob goes* bid him † not fear to go down into *Egypt*, since he would be with him, and protect him, and, in due Time, bring his Posterity out of it again to enter into the Possession of the promis'd Land; and that, as to his own Particular, he should live near his beloved *Joseph*, die in his Arms, † and have his Eyes clos'd by his Hand. So that, encourag'd by this

(c) Gen. xlv. 28.

† It is not unlikely, that the good old Man had promis'd himself the Comfort of spending the Remainder of his Days in the Land, which God had been pleas'd to promise him; and therefore, after so much Labour of Life, and Change of Place, when he thought himself at the End of his Pilgrimage, and perhaps depended upon the Patriarchal Line being put in Possession before his Death, to be oblig'd to leave his Land, and to go into a foreign one, was not a little discouraging; especially if he retain'd in his Mind the melancholy Prediction to his Grandfather, Gen. xv. 13. *Know of a Surety, that thy Seed shall be a Stranger in a Land, that is not theirs, four hundred Years, and shall serve them.* Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.

† There seems to be something of a Reason in Nature, why such a particular Regard should be had, at Death, to the Eyes; and that is, because they are in Life so eminently serviceable both to Body and Mind. We close the Eyes of the Dead, because no Part of the Body looks so ghastly after Death, whereas nothing was so sprightly and beautiful before: And the Reason why the nearest in Blood or Friendship should have this Office, is too obvious to need any Explication.

Dii precor hoc jubeant, ut euntibus ordine fatis,

Ille meos oculos comprimat, ille tuos.

Penel. ad Ulyss. de Telemach.

A. M. 2276, &c. Ant. Christ. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

this divine *Promise*; *Jacob* left *Beer-sheba*, and cheerfully pursued his Journey into *Egypt*, where, when he arriv'd, † he, and his Family made up, in all, just || the Complement of seventy Persons.

As soon as he came within the Borders of *Egypt*, not far from the Land of *Goshen*, he sent *Judah* before to acquaint his Son *Joseph*, with his Arrival; who instantly took his Chariot, with a Retinue, suitable to his high Station, and, with

† The whole Account of *Jacob's* Sons and Grandsons, who went along with him into *Egypt*, stands thus, — By *Leah* 32; by *Zilpah* 16; by *Rachel* 11; by *Bilhah* 7: In all 66, exclusive of *Jacob* himself, and of *Joseph*, and his two Sons, which make up the 70: And 'twas necessary indeed, that these *Genealogies* should be exactly register'd, not only to distinguish each *Tribe*, and thereby discover the *Messias*, when he came; but (as it is in the Case before us) to make it apparent, that the Increase of *Israel*, even under Oppression, should bear a fair Proportion to the Promise made to *Abraham*, viz. *That his Seed should be even as the Stars of Heaven, and as the Sand upon the Sea shore, for Multitude.* Universal History, and Bibliotheca Bibl.

|| There are three different Accounts in Scripture of the Number of *Jacob's* Family, when they came down into *Egypt*. In *Gen.* xlv. 26. it is said, that *all the Souls, which came with Jacob into Egypt, were threescore and six*: In the very next Verse, and in *Deut.* x. 22. it is said, that *they were threescore and ten*; and yet *St. Stephen*, in *Acts* vii. 14. tells us expressly, that they were *seventy-five*. Now, in order to reconcile these seeming Contradictions, we must observe, that in each Place there is a different Manner of Computation. In the first Catalogue, *Moses* speaks of those Persons only, *who came out of Jacob's Loins*, i. e. his Children and Grandchildren, that went into *Egypt* with him; and these, exclusive of *Jacob* himself, and *Joseph* and his two Sons, who were in *Egypt* before, were exactly *sixty-six*: Whereas, including *Jacob* himself, together with *Joseph* and his Sons, *Ephraim*, and *Manasseh*, (who, tho' they were in *Egypt* before, yet, living there as Strangers only, and having their Original from the Land of *Canaan*, may be reckon'd, as if they had come into *Egypt* with *Jacob*) the Number is exactly seventy. The Difference between *Moses* and *St. Stephen* is a little more difficult to reconcile; and yet, if we suppose, that *St. Stephen* follows the first Number of *Moses*, viz. *sixty-six*, out of which he excludes *Jacob*, *Joseph* and his two Sons, and to which he adds only nine of his Sons Wives (for *Judah's* Wife was already dead, and *Benjamin* is suppos'd to be still unmarried, and *Joseph's* Wife out of the Case) these nine Wives, I say, which, tho' not of *Jacob's* Blood, yet belong'd to his Family, and to *Joseph's* Kindred

with infinite Satisfaction, congratulated his Arrival at a Place, where he had it in his Power to make his Life happy and comfortable. What the Expressions of *filial* Duty, and *paternal* Affection were upon this Occasion, Words cannot describe: Tears of Joy flow'd from both Sides; and, while the Son was contemplating the Goodness of God, in bringing him to the Sight of his aged Father, the Father, on the other Hand, thought all his Happiness upon Earth compleated in this *Interview*; and therefore, (d) *Now let me die*, says he to his Son, *since I have seen thy Face, because thou art yet alive.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

As soon as these tender Greetings, and the solemn Rejoicings, which follow'd upon them, were over, *Joseph* propos'd to his Father and Brethren, to go, and acquaint *Pharaoh* with their Arrival: And, as he suppos'd, that the King would have a Curiosity to see some of them, he gave them in Charge, that, in Case he should ask them what Occupation they were of, their Answer should be, that they were *Shepherds*, as their Ancestors, for many Generations, had been before them; by which Means he might † secure for

Kindred (which is the very Expression *St. Stephen* makes Use of) added to the Number of *sixty-six* other Persons, will amount exactly to *seventy-five*. *Patrick's Commentary*, *Universal and Howell's Histories*.

(d) Gen. xlv. 30.

† By the general Consent of *antient Geographers*, the Land of *Goshen* is situate in the *Eastern Part* of *Egypt*, between the *Red-Sea*, and the River *Nile*, upon the Borders of *Canaan*. It was a fruitful Spot of Ground, very fit for Pasturage, and therefore *Josephus* tells us, that *Pharaoh's* own Cattle were kept there, and accordingly we find him ordering *Joseph* to make one of his Brothers the *Inspector-General* over them. The Country was separate from *Egypt*: And, for this Reason, the *Israelites*, inhabiting it, might keep themselves in a Body, without endangering their Religion or Manners, by intermixing with the *Egyptians*, and without incurring their Envy or Odium, as they would have done, had they liv'd among them, and shar'd any Power or Profit in the Government. They came down into *Egypt* upon a particular Exigency, and were to return again, to take Possession of the *promis'd Land*; and therefore a Country, that lay in a Manner contiguous to it, was the most convenient for their Abode, that they might be in Readiness to remove, whenever God should order them to leave it, which they would not have found so easy a Thing to do, had they been settled in the Heart of *Egypt*. *Pool's Annotations*.

A. M. 2276, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1728, &c.
From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

for them the *Land of Goshen*, which would be a separate Habitation, and an happy Retreat from the Insults of the *Egyptians*, who were known † to have an utter Detestation to Shepherds.

WITH this Caution he took five of his Brothers along with him ; and, having informed *Pharaoh*, that his Father and Family were come as far as *Goshen*, he presented his Brothers to the King, who, for his Sake, received them very graciously, and when he ask'd them, what Profession they were of, they told him that they were Shepherds, as their Family, for many Generations, had been ; that Want of Pasture for their Cattle, and of Sustenance for themselves, had made them leave *Canaan* ; but that since (as they understood) his Majesty had been so hospitable, as to give them Reception in his Dominions, they humbly pray'd, that they might be allow'd to settle in *Goshen*, as a Country most convenient for their Purpose : Which he readily granted, and offer'd moreover to make any one of them, whom *Joseph* should appoint, his *royal* Shepherd.

Not

† The Country of *Egypt* (as *Diodorus* tells us, l. 1.) was divided into three Parts, whereof the *Priests* had one, the *King* a second, and the *Soldiery* a third : But, under these, there were three other Ranks of Men, *Shepherds*, *Husbandmen*, and *Artificers*. The *Husbandmen* serv'd the King, and the other two Orders, in tilling the Ground, for very small Wages, and so did the *Shepherds*, in their Capacities ; for the *Egyptians*, we must remember, had Sheep and Oxen, as well as Horses and Asses, which they sold unto *Joseph*, in the Time of the Famine. It cannot be thought therefore, that they abominated all Shepherds in general, but only such *Shepherds* as were *Foreigners*, and for what Reason it was that they did this, is not so easy a Matter to resolve. Some are of Opinion, that Shepherds were held in Detestation, because they were a People, in those Days, addicted to *Robbery*, which made them very odious to the *Egyptians* : But others imagine, that Theft, among the *Egyptians*, was not reputed so abominable a Crime ; and therefore they think, that the most probable Reason of this Aversion to Shepherds, and to the *Hebrews*, as such, was the great Oppression, and Tyranny, under which they had lately groan'd, when the *Phœnician* Shepherds penetrated *Egypt*, wasted their Cities, burnt their Temples, murder'd the Inhabitants, and seated themselves, for a considerable while, in the Possession of it. But, upon whatever Account it was, that the *Egyptians* had this Aversion to Shepherds, it certainly was an Instance of *Joseph's* great Modesty and Love

NOT long after this, *Joseph*, in like Manner, presented A. M. his Father to *Pharaoh*, who, seeing him look very hale and 2276, &c. hearty, and desiring to know of what Age he might be, Ant. Christ. 1728, &c. was inform'd by *Jacob*, that he was † an *hundred and thir-* From Gen. ty; which when the King seem'd to wonder at, he told him xxxvii. to the End. moreover, that his Life was not, as yet, near so long, as that of some of his Ancestors, because his Fate had been to *Has an In-* have too large a Share of Troubles and Fatigues to *harras,* *terview* and wear him out: And so, wishing his Majesty Abundance *with the* of Health and Prosperity, he return'd to *Goshen*, where *Jo-* *King, and* *settles at Go-* *then.* *seph* took care to supply him, and all his Family, with such a plentiful Provision of Corn, and other Necessaries from the

P 2

Love of Truth, that he was not ashamed of an Employment, so mean in itself, and so vile in the Eyes of the *Egyptians*. Had he been minded to make the most of the Matter, he might have instructed his Brothers to have conceal'd their Way, or Business of Life; or, if he was aware, that they would follow the same in *Egypt*, that they had done in *Canaan*, he might nevertheless have put into their Mouths the high Dignity of their Descent, and the wonderful History of their Family, *viz.* that *Abraham* was their *great Grandfather*, a Prince renown'd for his Defeat of four confederated Monarchs; that *Isaac* was their Grandfather, whose Amity and Alliance had been courted by Kings; and that *Israel* was their Father, who once gain'd a Victory even over a mighty Prince of the celestial Host; all great Men in their Generations, and dignified with the Conversation of God himself. This, and a great deal more, had *Joseph* been minded to serve the Purposes of Vanity, he might have suggested to his Brethren; but, by this open Declaration, we may perceive, that his Pleasure and Ambition was, that the wonderful Chain of the divine Measures and Counsels, in bringing him, from an humble Condition of Life, to such a Sublimity of Power and Figure, might be as conspicuous as possible. *Pool's Annotations, Patrick's Commentary, and Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

† *Pharaoh's* Question to *Jacob*, and *Jacob's* Answer, we may suppose, were not all the Discourse, that pass'd between them, but only what most deserv'd to be mention'd, because (as the learned *Pererius* observes) this Answer of *Jacob's* is the very Hinge upon which the whole *Chronology* of the patriarchal Times turns. The same excellent Commentator remarks, that, tho' *Jacob* liv'd seventeen Years after this, yet, even at last, he did not attain to the *Days of the Years of the Life of his Fathers*; since his Father *Isaac* liv'd an hundred and fourscore Years, and his Grandfather *Abraham* to an hundred and seventy five. *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728. &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Joseph's
wife Ma-
nagement in
Egypt.

the King's Storehouses, as, in the Time of the greatest Scarceness, made him insensible of any Want.

BUT while *Jacob* and his Family liv'd in Plenty, the *Egyptians* found the sad Effects of the *Famine*, which increasing daily upon them, and *Joseph* holding up his Corn at a high Rate, in a short Time brought all their Money into the King's Coffers; and, when their Money was gone, they were all (except the *Priests*, who were furnished from the King's Stores) oblig'd to part with their Cattle, their Houses, their Lands, and, || at length, their *very selves*, for Provisions. All these *Joseph* purchas'd of the People in the King's Name, and for the King's Use; and, to let them see, that the Purchase was in earnest, and that their Liberties and Properties were now become the King's, he transplanted them, from their former Places of Abode, into distant and different Parts of the Kingdom, that they might in Time lose the very Remembrance of their antient Possessions.

THIS, in another Person, might have been thought an immoderate Zeal for an *absolute* Power in the King, and an Advantage unjustly taken of the Necessities of the Subject; but *Joseph* so manag'd the Matter, as to gain the Commendation of both Prince and People. For, when the *seventh*, and last Year of Famine was come, he acquainted them, that they might now expect a Crop against next Year; that the *Nile* would overflow, and the Earth bring forth her Fruits, as usual. Hereupon he distributed fresh Lands, Cattle, and Corn to them, that they might return to their Tillage, as before; but upon this Condition he did it, that, from thenceforward, the *fifth* Part of all the Product of their Lands should go to the King, and the rest be theirs. To these Conditions the People willingly consented, as imputing the Preservation of their Lives intirely to *Joseph's* Care; and from that Time it pass'd into a Law, that the fifth Part of the Product of the Land of *Egypt* should always belong to the Crown.

WHILST

|| When the *Egyptians* were drove to this last Extremity, in our Translation it is said to be in the *second Year*; but this must not be understood to be the *second Year* of the seven Years of Famine, but the *second* after that last mention'd, wherein they had sold their Cattle, which was in reality the *last Year* of the Famine; because he now gave them Corn for *Seed*, as well as for *Food*; whereas, in the first Years, there was neither *sowing* nor *reaping*. Gen. xlv. 6. *Pool's* Annotations.

WHILST *Joseph* was enjoying the Fruits of his great Success and Policy, his Family at *Goshen*, (which he fail'd not frequently to visit) became very wealthy, and very numerous, till, at length, his Father *Jacob*, finding himself grow old and feeble, and perceiving that his latter End was near approaching, sent for him, and to this Purpose address'd himself to him. "Tho' the Desire of seeing a Son, so dear to me as you are, rais'd to the Height of Egyptian Glory, join'd to the raging *Famine*, which then visited our Land, made me willingly come down into this strange Country; yet *Canaan* being the Inheritance, which God promised to *Abraham* and his Posterity, and where he lies interr'd with my Father *Isaac*, and some others of our Family, in the Ground, which he purchas'd of the Inhabitants for that Purpose; my last, and dying Request to you is, † that you will not suffer me to be buried here, but swear to see me carried to *Machpelah*, and there deposited with my Ancestors. Your great Power with the King will easily obtain that Favour, " which

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.
His visiting
his Father
before he
died.

P 3

† Tho' there be something of a natural Desire in most Men to be buried in the Places, where their Ancestors lie; yet *Jacob's* Aversion to have his Remains deposited in *Egypt* seems to be more earnest than ordinary, or otherwise he would never have impos'd an Oath upon his Sons, and charg'd them all, with his dying Breath, not to suffer it to be done. For he very well knew, that had his Body been buried in *Egypt*, his Posterity, upon that very Account, would have been too much wedded to the Country, ever to attempt the Acquisition of the promis'd Land; and therefore, to wean them from the Thoughts of continuing in *Egypt*, and fix their Minds and Affections in *Canaan*, he order'd his Body to be carried thither beforehand, in Testimony, that he died in full Persuasion of the Truth of the Promises, which were given to him, and his Ancestors: Nor was it inconvenient, that future Generations, after their Return into *Canaan*, should have before their Eyes the Sepulchre of their Forefathers, for a Record of their Virtues, and an Incitement to the Imitation of them. But the strongest Motive of all for *Jacob's* desiring to be buried in *Canaan* (supposing that he foreknew that our Saviour *Christ* was to live and die, and, with some others, rise again in that Country) was, that he might be one of that blessed Number; as it was indeed an antient Tradition in the Church, that, among those, who came out of their Graves after our Lord's Resurrection, Matth. xxvii. 53. the Patriarch *Jacob* was one. *Pool's Annotations*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

“ which is the last I have to ask.” *Joseph* was not long before he gave his Father a satisfactory Answer. He promis’d, and he swore to him, that he would fulfil his Desire, which pleas’d the good old Man to that Degree, that || he bow’d, and made his Acknowledgment for this kind Assurance.

JOSEPH, who could not be long absent from Court, took his Leave of his Father, but not without giving strict Charge to some of the Family, that, upon the very first Appearance of Danger, they should immediately send for him. Accordingly, as soon as Word was brought him, that his Father was a-dying, he took his two Sons, *Manasseh*, and *Ephraim*, with him, and went to visit him; who, when he heard that his favourite Son was come, summon’d all his Spirits

|| The Words in our Translation are, *he bowed himself upon the Bed's Head*, Gen. xlvii. 31. where some Expositors, presuming that his *Bowing* was a religious Action, will, by no Means, have it directed to *Joseph*, but to God only, for the Assurance, which *Joseph* had given him, that he should be buried according to his Desire. But, if the *Word* must be translated *bowed*, there is no Necessity to make it an Act of Adoration, but only a common Form of Civility, wherewith a *Father* might comply without any Diminution to his Superiority over his *Son*. What led these Expositors into this Conception, was the *Version* of the *Septuagint*, and the Words of the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, where *Jacob* is said (in Allusion, as they suppose, to this Passage) to have *worshipped upon the Top of his Staff*, Heb. xi. 21. But the plain Truth is, that the Apostle here speaks of another Thing; not of what *Jacob* did now, when *Joseph* swore unto him, but of what he did, when he bless’d his other *Children*. In the former Case, he seems to have kept his Bed; but, in the latter, to have receiv’d fresh Spirits, and sat upon it, though leaning perhaps *upon his Staff*. So that, the Apostle’s Words are not taken from these of *Moses*, but are a Reflection of his own, whereby he signifies the Strength of *Jacob*’s Faith, even when he was so weak, as not to be able to bow himself, and worship, without the Help of his *Staff*. This clearly removes the Difficulty, and reconciles *Moses* and the Apostle very perfectly. But there seems to be a more compendious Way of doing this; for, since the Word *Schacab*, which signifies *to bow the Body*, may, in like Manner, be render’d to *lie*, or *fall down*, the most easy Translation seems to be, *he laid himself down upon his Pillow*, as weak Men are wont to do, after they have sat up a while, to dispatch some Business. *Patrick’s* and *Le Clerc’s* Commentaries.

Spirits together, and was so far reviv'd, as to be able to sit up in his Bed.

HERE he began with recapitulating all the glorious Promises, which God had formerly made him, concerning his numerous Posterity's inhabiting the Land of *Canaan*, and concluded † with the Death of his dear *Rachel*. "How tenderly I lov'd her, continued he, all my Family can testify; but this farther Proof I design to give you of my Affection to her. You have two Sons born in a foreign Country, and who, according to the usual Order of Inheritance, should have only the Portion of *Grandchildren* in the Division of the promis'd Land; but, from this Day forward, they shall be call'd by my Name, be esteem'd my Sons, and as Heads of two distinct Tribes (for they shall not be called the Tribe of *Joseph*, but the Tribe of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*) receive a double Portion in that Allotment: But it must not be so with the other Sons, which you beget after these. They come in only for the Portion of Grandchildren: And to you in particular, I bequeath that Tract of Ground, which, by the Force of Arms, I took from the *Amorites*, that it may descend to your Tribe for ever."

ALL this while *Jacob*, whose Sight was very much decay'd, talk'd to his Son concerning his Children, as if they had been absent; but, when he perceiv'd that they were in the Room, he rejoic'd not a little, and order'd them to be brought near him. *Joseph* plac'd them in a Position, according to the Order of their Age, to receive his Father's Blessing; but *Jacob*, crossing his Hands, laid his right (which

P 4

carry'd

† Since *Jacob* had so strictly insisted upon his being buried with his Father, and bound *Joseph* with an Oath to see it done, it was proper for him to explain and clear himself, as to what might be secretly objected to his not interring *Rachel* (*Joseph's* own Mother, and his best beloved Consort) in that burying place, where he so earnestly desir'd to lie himself; and for his Excuse in this Respect, he had two Things to offer; first, That he was then upon his Journey, and in his Return from *Padan*; and, 2dly, that he had erected a *monumental Pillar* upon her Grave, in a very publick and frequented Place: To which a *Right Reverend* Commentator has added a further Apology.—That, as she died in Child bed, and *Jacob*, in his Travels, might not have all Things necessary to preserve her Body long, he was constrain'd to bury her sooner perhaps, than otherwise he would have done. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

carry'd with it the Preference) upon the *Younger*, and his *left* upon the *Elder* of them ; which *Joseph*, supposing to proceed from a Mistake, was going to rectify, but was told by his Father, that what he did was by divine Direction, and so made *Ephraim* not only the first in Nomination, but gave him a Blessing much more extensive, than what he gave his Brother.

Jacob's Be-
nediction to
all his Chil-
dren.

By this Time, *Jacob* finding himself grow faint, and the Hour of his Departure near approaching, call'd the rest of his Sons together, to take his Farewel of them, and distribute his Blessing, or rather to foretel what should befall them, and their Posterity, in future Ages : And so, directing his Speech to them severally, he began with *Reuben* the eldest, and told him, — That for the Crime of Incest, in polluting his Father's Bed, he, and his Tribe were degraded † from the Privileges of his Birth-right. He told *Simeon* and *Levi*, (whom he joined together upon this Occasion) that, for their impious Massacre of *Hamor* and his People, † their Tribes shou'd for ever be separated and *dispers'd* among the other ; but then, turning to *Judah*, he prophesied of him, that to his Tribe shou'd the *Sovereignty* belong, and they be † situated in a very fruitful Country ; that from his Name shou'd

† The Privileges of the Birth-right consisted chiefly, in the Honour of the Priesthood, in the Rule and Government of the Family, and in a double Portion of the Inheritance, which, at this Time, were all taken away from *Reuben*, and divided severally ; since it appears in the Sequel of the History, that the Tribe of *Reuben* continu'd all along in Obscurity, while the Priesthood was conferr'd on *Levi*, the Government on *Judah*, and the double Portion on *Joseph*, to descend to their respective Tribes. *Howell's History of the Bible.*

† *Jacob's* Words, in this Place, may imply a double Dispersion, *viz.* of the two Tribes from each other ; and of their being interspers'd among the rest : And, accordingly, that of *Levi* had no *Inheritance* among his Brethren, in the *Land of Canaan*, but only a certain Number of Cities assign'd to them in every Tribe. And, as for that of *Simeon*, they had properly no more, than a Portion of *Judah's* Inheritance, *Josh.* xix. 1. if we except some few Places, which they got upon Mount *Seir*, and in the Wilds of the Valley of *Gedor*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 39. &c. *Universal History*, l. 1. c. 7.

† The Country, which the Tribe of *Judah* was to inhabit, is thus describ'd by *Jacob* : Binding his Foe unto the Vine, and his As's unto the choice Vine ; he washed his Garments in Wine, and
his

shou'd the whole Nation of the *Jews* derive their Appellation; and that the Form of Government, which he then instituted, shou'd endure among them, until the *Messiah* came. † Of *Zebulun* he foretold, that his Tribe shou'd be planted near the Sea-coasts; and † of *Issachar*, that his shou'd prove a pusillanimous People, and be Lovers of inglorious Ease, more than of Liberty and Renown.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

FROM *Leah's* Sons the Patriarch passes to those of his two concubinary Wives; and † of *Dan's* Posterity he foretels,

his Cloaths in the Blood of Grapes, Gen. xlix. 11. which are Expressions somewhat *hyperbolical*: (For they imply, that Vines, in this Country, shou'd be as common as Thorns in other Places; and Wine as plentiful as Water) but were, in a great Measure, answer'd in that fertile Land, which fell to the Tribe of *Judah's* Share. For here was the Valley of *Escol*, a Bunch of whose Grapes was brought by the *Spies* as a Specimen of the Fruitfulness of the Land, *Numb.* xiii. 23. Here was a *Brook*, or *Torrent*, of the same Name, along whose Banks were the most delicious Pasture-Grounds for Cattle; and, as modern Travelers tell us, here are very large Grapes still to be met with, especially in the Valley of *Hebron*, which, in all Probability, is that, through which this *Torrent* runs. *Pool's* Annotations, *Bibliotheca Bibl.* and *Universal History*, l. 1. c. 7.

† Had *Jacob* been present at the Division of the Land of *Canaan*, he cou'd hardly have given a more exact Description of *Zebulun's* Lot, than we find him doing, two hundred and fifty Years before it happen'd. For it extended from the *Mediterranean-Sea* on the West, to the Lake of *Genesareth* on the East, and lay therefore very commodiously for Trade and Navigation. The foretelling so precisely and distinctly the Situation and Employment of this Tribe, tho', at first Appearance, it may seem a Matter of no great Moment, yet will be found to be quite otherwise, when it is consider'd, that such *Particularities* as these could not but be very convincing to the *Israelites*, that it was not Chance, nor Power, nor Policy, that put them in Possession of the Land of *Canaan*, but *God's Right-hand*, and *his Arm*, and the *Light of his Countenance*, because he had a *Favour* unto them.

† No less remarkable is the Description of *Issachar's* Tribe, since, tho' they were a very laborious People in all rural Employments, yet they had no great Inclination to War; and were therefore frequently infested, and subjected by Strangers, especially in the Time of the Judges.

† The *Jews* think, that the Prophecy of *Dan's* destroying his Enemies by Craft, was more particularly fulfill'd, when

Sampson,

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

tels, that tho' they were descended from an Handmaid, yet they shou'd have the same Privileges with the other Tribes, shou'd become a politick People, and greatly vers'd in the Stratagems of War; of † *Gad's*, that they shou'd be frequently infested with *Robbers*, but overcome them at last; of *Asher's*, that they shou'd be situated in a fruitful and exuberantly rich Soil; and ‡ of *Naphtali's*, that they shou'd spread their Branches like an Oak, and multiply exceedingly.

† *JACOB* had reserv'd the Sons of his beloved *Rachel* to the last; and therefore, turning to † *Joseph*, at the same Time

Sampson, who was of that Tribe, pull'd down the Temple, which crush'd himself and the *Philistines* to Death.

† *Gad's* Lot happen'd on the other Side of *Jordan*, where they were continually expos'd to the Incurfions of the bordering *Arabs*; but by their Watchfulness and Bravery, they not only prevented them, but several Times caught, and plunder'd them in their Turns, insomuch, that in one Battle, they took from them fifty thousand Camels, two hundred and fifty thousand Sheep, besides an hundred thousand Men Prisoners, *Deut.* xxxiii. 22, &c.

‡ The Words in our Translation, *Naphtali is a Hind let loose, he giveth goodly Words*, are very obscure, and scarce intelligible. For tho' the former Part of the Prediction is commonly apply'd to *Barak's* overcoming *Siferah*, and the latter to that noble *Canticle*, which *Deborah* made upon that Occasion; yet the Exposition, which the learned *Bochart* gives us of this Passage, *He shall be like a Tree that shooteth out pleasant Branches*, is both more agreeable to the Original, and more answerable to the Event; since no Tribe multiply'd so wonderfully, as this of *Naphtali*, who had but four Sons, when he came into *Egypt*, and yet could muster upwards of fifty-three thousand Men fit to bear Arms, when he came out of it, *i. e.* in less than 220 Years. Essay towards a new Translation.

† In the Benediction, which *Jacob* gives his Favourite *Joseph*, there are two remarkable Titles, which he confers upon him. 1st, *That he was the Shepherd, and the Stone of Israel*, which seems to be a thankful Recognition of *Joseph's* Kindness to his Father and Family, in keeping, and feeding them, even as a *Shepherd* does his Sheep; by which Means he became the *Foundation*, or *Basis*, as it were, of the House of *Jacob*, by preserving them from perishing by Famine, and continuing them settled in the best Part of the *Egyptian* Kingdom, for a considerable Time: Tho' some refer it rather to his virtuous resisting the Temptations of his Mistress, and patiently enduring the

Time that he recollects his past Troubles, and sets forth the future Greatness of his Tribe, he pours down upon him, and in him, upon his Posterity, Benedictions of all Kinds. "The Lord, even the God of thy Fathers, says he, shall bless thee with the Dew of Heaven, and with the Fatness of the Earth, with the Fruit of the Womb, i. e. with a numerous Posterity, and with the Fruit of the Breast, with Plenty of all Sorts of Cattle. May all the Blessings, promis'd to me and my Forefathers, be doubled upon Joseph's royal Head; may they out-top and out-stretch the everlasting Mountains, and prove to him more fruitful, and more lasting, than they."

A. M. 2276, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1728, &c.
From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

WHETHER *Jacob* might foresee no Merit or Happiness extraordinary in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, or that its being afterwards blended with the Tribe of *Judah* might make it partake of the same Blessing; but so it was, that he contented himself with describing its † fierce and warlike Disposition, which,

the Master's Severity, to both of which he remain'd as immoveable, as a Stone. 2d, The other Title is, that he was *separate from his Brethren*: Where, tho' the Word *Nazir* signifies to *separate* (as *Joseph* was certainly separated from his Brethren, when he was sold into *Egypt*) yet, as it is hardly supposable, that *Jacob* would couch so cruel an Action in so soft a Term, 'tis rather to be thought, that he us'd the Word *Nazir*, which signifies *crown'd*, in Allusion to the Superintendants of the King's Household, in all the Eastern Countries, who were call'd *Nazirs*, and wore probably some Kind of *Diadem* about their Heads, by Way of Distinction and Grandeur. And, as for the Fruitfulness promis'd to *Joseph*, this was exemplify'd in the large Extent of his two-fold Tribe, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, which at their first numbering yielded seventy two thousand seven hundred, *Numb. i.* and at their *second*, eighty-five thousand, and two hundred Men, all able to go out to War, *Numb. xxvi.*

† How brave and warlike a Body of Men, and how very expert in Feats of Arms, this Tribe became, we may conceive from what we are told of them, viz, that *there were seven hundred chosen Men among them, left-handed, every one of whom could sling Stones at an Hair's Breadth, and not miss*, *Judges xx. 15.* And how pertinacious they were in their Undertakings of this Kind, is manifest, both from the fierce Battles, which they fought against all the other Tribes, (tho' in a very bad Cause, *Judges xix.*) wherein they twice came off Conquerors; and from the long Opposition, which the House of *Saul*, descended from this Tribe, made against the Accession of *David* to the Throne, and which cou'd not be suppress'd, until *Abner*, the General

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Death and
solemn
Funeral.

which, like a ravenous *Wolf*, would shed the Blood of its Enemies, and in the Evening divide their Spoil.

THUS the good old Patriarch having given his † Blessing to his Children, according to the divine Direction, and not according to his own Inclination, reminded them all, (but *Joseph* more especially) to bury him among his Ancestors, in the Cave of *Machpelah*; and so laying himself down in his Bed again, in a short Time expir'd, after he had liv'd 147 Years in all, and seventeen of these in *Egypt*.

THE Loss of so good a Father was doubtless lamented by all his Family, but by none with more sincere Expressions of filial Sorrow, than by *Joseph*. At length, remembering his dying Charge, he order'd his Physicians (according to the Custom of the Country) to * embalm his Father's Body,

General of their Forces, had forsook them, *Judges*, and 1 *Sam.* passim.

† Besides these Prophecies of *Jacob*, which were sufficiently verified by their Events, the *Jews* ascribe some other Works to him, viz. a Treatise, entitled, *The Ladder to Heaven*, and another call'd, *Jacob's Testament*, which Pope *Gelasius* reckons among the *Apocrypha*; together with some Forms of Prayer, which the *Jews* use every Night, and pretend that they were compos'd by him. As to the Commendations, which they so plentifully bestow upon this Patriarch, these, in a great Measure, are justify'd by the Character, which the Author of *Ecclesiasticus* gives him, Chap. xlv. 23. And, as the *Mahometans* allow him not only to be a Prophet, but the Father likewise of all the Prophets, except *Job*, *Jethro*, and *Mahomet*; so they believe, that the Royal Dignity did not depart from his Posterity, until the Times of *John the Baptist*, and *Jesus Christ*; and that from him the Twelve Tribes of the *Jews* did spring, even as their own Twelve did from *Ishmael*. *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the Word *Jacob*.

* The Manner of embalming among the *Egyptians*, according to *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, and others, was as follows. When a Man died, his Body was carry'd to the Artificers, whose Business it was to make Coffins. The upper Part of the Coffin represented the Person, who was to be put in it, whether Man or Woman; and (if a Person of Distinction) was generally adorn'd with such Paintings and Embellishments, as were suitable to its Quality. When the Body was brought home again, they agreed with the Embalmers; but, according to the Quality of the Person, the Prices were different. The highest was a Talent, i. e. about three hundred Pounds Sterling; twenty *Minæ* was a moderate one; and the lowest a very small Matter. As the

Body, and all Preparations for his Funeral to be made. For the Space of *seventy* Days they continu'd their Mourning for him; † in which Time it being improper for *Joseph* to appear at Court, he desir'd some of the Officers about the King to acquaint his Majesty, that his Father, before his Death, had oblig'd him, upon Oath, to bury him in a Sepulchre belonging to their Family, in the Land of *Canaan*; and that therefore he begg'd Leave to go, and fulfil his last Commands, and wou'd, without Delay, return again. The King readily consented to his Request, and order'd more-over the chief Officers of his Household, and some of the principal

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

the Body lay extended, one of them, whom they call'd the *Designer*, mark'd out the Place, on the left Side, where it was to be open'd, and then a *Dissector*, with a very sharp *Egyptian* Stone, made the Incision, through which they drew all the Intestines, except the Heart and Kidneys, and then wash'd them with Palm-Wine, and other strong and binding Drugs. The Brains they drew through the Nostrils, with an hook'd Piece of Iron, made particularly for that Purpose, and fill'd the *Skull* with astringent Drugs. The whole Body they anointed with Oil of *Cedar*, with Myrrh, Cinnamon, and other Drugs, for about thirty Days, by which Means it was preserv'd *intire*, without so much as losing its Hair, and *sweet*, without any Signs of Putrefaction. After this, it was put into Salt, about forty Days; and therefore when *Moses* says, that *forty* Days were employ'd in embalming *Jacob*, Gen. 1. 3. he must mean the forty Days of his continuing in the Salt of Nitre, without including the *thirty* Days, that were spent in the other Operations above-mention'd; so that, in the whole, they mourn'd seventy Days in *Egypt*, as *Moses* likewise observes. Last of all, the Body was taken out of this Salt, wash'd, and wrapp'd up in Linnen Swaddling-bands dipp'd in Myrrh, and rubb'd with a certain Gum, which the *Egyptians* us'd instead of Glue, and so return'd to the Relations, who put it into the *Coffin*, and kept it in some Repository in their Houses, or in *Tombs*, made particularly for that Purpose. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Embalm*, and *Warburton's* Divine Legation, Vol. II. l. 3.

† It was against Rule, for any Person, how great soever, in Mourning Apparel, to appear in Publick, and especially in the Royal Presence, because, in that State, they were look'd upon as *desil'd*; and therefore *Joseph* does not go himself, but desires some of the Courtiers to carry his Request to the King: And this Request he was the rather bound to make, because the Retinue and Guard, which the Pomp of the Funeral, and the Danger of Molestation from Enemies, made necessary, cou'd not be obtain'd without the King's Leave. *Musculus*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

principal Nobility of the Kingdom, to attend the Funeral, who, join'd with his own, and his Father's whole Family, some in Chariots, and some on Horfeback, made * a very large and pompous Proceffion.

As foon as they were enter'd into the Land of *Canaan*, they made an Halt at † the *Threfhing-Floor of Atad*, and there continu'd mourning, and lamenting the Death of their Friend

* The Splendor and Magnificence of our Patriarch's Funeral feems to be without a Parallel in Hiftory. What hitherto has moft affected me in the Comparifon, were indeed the noble *Obfequies of Marcellus*, as *Virgil* has describ'd them; but how do even thefe (with all their *Parade* of Poetry about them) fall fhort of the plain and fimple Narrative before us? For what are the *fix hundred Beds*, for which the *Roman Solemnities*, on this Occafion, were fo famous, in Comparifon of that *national itinerant Multitude*, which fwell'd like a Flood, and mov'd like a River, to all *Pharaoh's Servants*, to the *Elders of his Houfe*, and all the *Elders of the Land of Egypt*, i. e. to the Officers of his Houfhould, and Deputies of his Provinces, with all the *House of Jofeph*, and his *Brethren*, and his *Father's Houfe*, conducting their folemn Sorrow for near three hundred Miles into a diftant Country? *Bibliotheca Bibl. Occaf. Annot.* 46.

† The Words in the Text are, ——— *And they came to the threfhing Floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan*, Gen. l. 10. Where this Place was, we cannot determine from any Account in Scripture; but it is very probable, that it lay not far from the Place, where *Jacob* was buried, and fo not far from *Hebron*. For fince it is abfurd to fuppofe, that the Corps of *Jacob* was carried to the Cave of *Machpelah*, fuch a round-about Way, as the *Israelites* went afterwards into the Land of *Canaan*, viz. through *Arabia Petræa*, quite on the Eastern Side of *Jordan*, it remains to fuppofe, that thefe Places are faid to be *beyond Jordan*, not in refpect of *Egypt*, from whence *Jacob's* Corps was brought, but in refpect of the Place, where *Mofes* was, when he wrote the Hiftory, i. e. in a Country on the *East of Jordan*; and confequently the Places *beyond Jordan* muft be fuch, as lay on the *West of Jordan*: But why they made the Threfhing-Floor of *Atad*, rather than the Place of Interment, the Scene of their Lamentations, is not fo eafy to refolve. Perhaps it was a Place more convenient to ftay in for *feven Days*, than the Field of *Machpelah*; or perhaps it might be the Custom, at the very Entrance of the Country, where they carry'd the Corps to be bury'd, to fall into Lamentations, which they might repeat at the Grave again, though no Mention be made of it here. *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. I. and *Patrick's Commentary*.

Friend and Father, seven Days; which made the *Canaanites*, A. M. 2276, &c. perceiving that the Company came from *Egypt*, call the Ant. Chris. 1728, &c. Place, *Abel-mizraim*, or the Mourning of the *Egyptians*, From Gen. xxxvii. to the End. ever after. They thence continu'd their March, till they came to the Field of *Machpelah*, where * they deposited *Jacob* in the Cave with his Ancestors, and so return'd to *Egypt* again.

As soon as their Father was bury'd, *Joseph's* Brethren began to reflect on the Wrongs they had formerly done him, Joseph's Promises to his Brothers. and were not a little apprehensive, that, as he certainly had it in his Power, he might now have it in his Intention, to avenge himself of them: And therefore they consulted together, and fram'd this Message, ——— That it was his Father's earnest Request, that he should forget all past Injuries, and continue them under his Protection, as formerly. This when *Joseph* heard, such was his compassionate Temper, that he could not refrain from weeping; and therefore (to remove their Fears) he sent immediately for them, and, receiving them with the same kind Affection, as when their Father was alive, excus'd the Actions, committed against him, in such an obliging Manner, and gave them such Assurances of his future Love, and Adherence to them upon all Occasions, as made them return to their Families full of Joy and Satisfaction.

* THE *sacred History* gives us no further Account of And his Death. any Particulars in *Joseph's* Life, though he liv'd fifty four Years.

* The *Jewish* Doctors have a Tradition of a bloody Fight, which *Joseph* had, at his Father's Funeral, with one *Tzeppo*, the Son of *Eliphaz*, who wou'd have oppos'd his burying him in the Cave of *Machpelah*, as disputing his Title to the Ground; but that *Joseph*, and his Men, having overcome him, carry'd him away with them into *Egypt*, and kept him there Prisoner, as long as *Joseph* liv'd; however, as soon as he was dead, *Tzeppo* found Means to escape into *Italy*. Universal History in the Notes, l. i. c. 7.

* The Author of *Ecclesiasticus* has given us an Encomium of the Patriarch *Joseph* in these Words: Of Jacob was this Man of Mercy born, who found Favour in the Eyes of all Flesh. He was born to be the Prince of his Brethren, and the Support of his Family; to be the Head of his Kinsmen, and the firm Support of his People. His Bones were visited, and prophesied after his Death, Chap. xlix. 15. His Meaning is, that his Bones were remov'd out of *Egypt*, and that this fell out as a Consequence of his Prophecy, that God wou'd visit the *Hebrews*, and bring them into the

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Years after his Father's Death. It informs us, that he liv'd to see himself the happy Parent of a numerous Offspring, in his two Sons, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, even to the third Generation; and all this while, we may presume, that he continu'd in high Favour with his Prince, and in weighty Employments under him. But, when he grew old, and found his Death approaching, he sent for his Brethren, and, with the like *prophetick Spirit*, that his father *Jacob* had done, told them, that God, according to his Promise, would not fail to bring their Posterity out of *Egypt*, into the Land of *Canaan*; and therefore he made them swear to him (as he had done to his Father) that, when it should please God thus to *visit* them, they would not forget to † carry his Body

the promis'd Land. The *Jewish* Rabbins have taken a great Latitude in ascribing several Particulars to this great Man, which have not the least Foundation in Scripture. They make him the Inventor of all the Arts and Sciences, for which the *Egyptians* afterwards became so famous; and attribute to him the Composition of several Books, such as *Joseph's Prayer*, *Joseph's Mirrour*, &c. which do not so much redound to his Credit. *Mahomet*, in his *Alcoran*, [Surat 12] relates his History at length, but blends it with many fabulous Circumstances, which have been much improv'd by the Eastern People; for they make him, in a manner, greater than the *Jewish* Doctors do. They tell us equally, that he taught the *Egyptians* the most sublime Sciences, and particularly *Geometry*, which was highly necessary in their Division of the Land. They suppose, that all the Wells, and Baths, and Granaries, which go under his Name, nay, that all the antient *Pyramids* and *Obelisks*, tho' they do not, were of his Erektion; and they believe, that he had all along upon his Shoulder a Point of Light, like a Star, which was an indelible Mark of the Gift of Prophecy: with many more Fictions of the like Nature. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Joseph*.

† There are several Reasons which might induce *Joseph* not to have his dead Body immediately carry'd into *Canaan*, and bury'd, as his Father's was. 1st, Because his Brethren, after his Decease, might not have Interest enough at Court to provide themselves with such Things, as were necessary to set off the Pomp and Solemnity of a Funeral befitting so great a Personage. 2dly, Because he might foresee, that the *Egyptians*, in all Probability, as long as their Veneration for his Memory was warm, wou'd hardly have suffer'd his Remains to have been carry'd into another Country. 3dly, Because the Continuance of his Remains among them might be a Means to preserve the

Remembrance

Body along with them : And to this Purpose, as soon as he was dead, (which was in the hundred and tenth Year of his Age) they had his Body embalm'd, and * kept in a Coffin, until the Time of their *Deliverance* should come.

A. M.
2276, &c..
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c..
From Gen:
xxxvii. to
the End.

The OBJECTION.

“ THE History of *Joseph* is as little liable to Exceptions, as almost any Portion of Scripture ; and yet therein we meet with some Facts, that are not so agreeable to our Apprehensions, nor consonant to the Character of that holy Patriarch. For, to pass by *Jacob's Farewel*, which seems rather to *curse*, than *bless* his Children, besides the many odd Comparisons, that attend it ; what shall we say to *Joseph's* marrying into an idolatrous Family, and swearing so frequently *by the Life of Pharaoh* ; to his practising (as his Steward insinuates) *Arts of Divination*, and advising the King to take the Advantage of a Famine, (at the Hazard of a Mutiny) in order to impoverish all his Subjects, except the *Priests* ; and what is more than all, to his cruel Usage of his Brethren, and putting his aged Father into so many Frights ?

His

Remembrance of the Services, he had done them, and thereby an Inducement to them to treat the Relations, he had left behind him, with more Kindness. 4thly, And chiefly, because the Presence of his Body with the *Israelites* might be a Pledge to assure them, and a Means to strengthen and confirm their Faith and Hope in God's Promises to their Progenitors, that he would infallibly put their Posterity in Possession of the Land of *Canaan* : And accordingly, when *Moses* deliver'd them out of *Egypt*, he carry'd *Joseph's* Body along with him [*Exod.* xiii. 19.] and committed it to the Care of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who buried it near *Shechem*, [*Josh.* xxiv. 32.] in the Field which *Jacob*, a little before his Death, gave to *Joseph*, as his peculiar Property. *Pererius* and *Patrick's* Commentaries. *Pool's* Annotations and *Calmet's* Dictionary under the Word.

* The *Jewish* Rabbins have a Story, that the *Egyptian Magicians* came and told *Pharaoh*, that if he had a mind to keep the *Hebrews* in his Dominions, he must hide *Joseph's* Body in some certain Place, where they shou'd never find it, because it wou'd be impossible for them to go out of *Egypt* without it ; that thereupon his Body was put into a Chest of 6000 lb. Weight, which was sunk in the Mud of one of the Branches of the River *Nile* ; and that *Moses* was forc'd to work a Miracle to get it out, and carry it away. *Calmet*, *ibid.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.



“ His Care and Concern for the Support of his Father, while he liv’d, and for his honourable Interment, when he came to die, was highly commendable without doubt : But we cannot but think, that the *Sacred Historian* was minded to aggrandize his Port and Manner of Living, when he represents him, as (e) *commanding his Servants the Physicians to embalm his Father*. For, besides the extravagant Piece of State of having such a Body of *Domesticks* about him ; (f) there is Reason to presume, that the Science of *Physick*, properly so called, was not, at this Time, so much as profess’d in *Egypt*, as it certainly was not in *Greece*, until *Hippocrates* brought it into Request : And, consequently, that the *Physicians*, which *Moses* here mentions, in order to display poor *Joseph*’s Magnificence, were no better, than a Company of *Dissectors* and *Embalmers*, which *Egypt* was known to abound with.

“ HOWEVER this be, it is hardly supposable, that *Joseph* should, in so short a Time, as *Moses* allows him, acquire a Knowledge of the *Egyptian* Language, sufficient to qualify him for the Office of *Potiphar*’s Steward ; nor can we conceive the Reason, why his Master, if he believ’d his Wife, and suppos’d him guilty of invading his Bed, did not immediately put him to Death. But, the greatest Wonder of all is, how this same *Potiphar* could be call’d an *Eunuch*, when it is so notorious that he had a Wife : How *Jacob* can say of himself, that he got a Tract of Ground with his Sword and his Bow, when it is so well known, that he was a peaceable Man, and was never engaged in War ; or how the famous Prophecy of the *Sceptre*’s not departing from *Judah* can be said to have been fulfill’d in its appointed Time, when the *Jews* (it must be own’d) had lost all Government of their own, and were subject to other Nations, long before the *Messias* came.”

Answer’d,
by shewing
that the Prophecy concerning
Judah’s Sceptre was fulfill’d in due
Time.

THE most material Objection we have plac’d at last ; and, because it relates to a Passage in Scripture, which is known to have its Difficulties, it may not be improper, in order to give it a clear Solution, first to cite the Passage itself, and, then to explain the Terms contain’d in it :

(g) *The*

(e) Gen. i. 2.

(f) *Shuckford*’s Connection, Vol. II. l. 9.

(g) *The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the Gathering of the People be.*

A M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

1. Now the Word *Shevet*, which we render *Sceptre*, has both a *literal*, and a *figurative* Signification. In its *literal*, it denotes a *Rod*, a *Wand*, a *Sceptre*, a *Shepherd's Crook*, &c. and in its *figurative*, it either implies the Correction and Punishment, whereof the *Rod*, or the Authority and Power, whereof the *Sceptre*, is the Ensign. It cannot be doubted, I think but, that the Word is to be taken in a *figurative* Sense here; and yet it cannot be suppos'd to signify *Punishment*, because the Tribe of *Judah* was so far from being in a State of Affliction, that it always flourish'd exceedingly, and, even in the Time of its *Captivity*, enjoy'd its own Form of *Government*. The Word must therefore, in this Place, be put for that *Power* and *Dominion*, whereof the *Sceptre*, in antient Times, was thought a fitter Representation, than either the *Crown* or *Diadem*.

2. THE Word *Mechokek*, which we translate *Law-giver*, is not *synonymous* with the former, but has two distinct Significations. It sometimes signifies, not a Person who has Power to make Laws himself, but only to *teach* and *instruct* others in those Laws, that are already made: And, in this Sense, it differs very little from the *Scribes*, and *Doctors*, and Teachers of the Law, whereof there is so much Mention made in our *Saviour's* Days. At other Times, it denotes a Person invested with Power and Authority even to make Laws, but then this Authority of his is inferior to that of a King; so that properly he may be call'd an inferior *Magistrate*, or Governor, set over a People, by the Licence of some *Monarch*, and, by his Commission, appointed to rule: And in this Sense the Word should rather be taken here, because there were such *Governors* and *Deputies* set over the *Jews*, after their Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity.

3. THE Phrase, which we render *between his Feet*, (according to the Modesty of the Scripture Expression) means nothing else, but *of his Seed* or *Posterity*; and so the Intendment of this Part of the Prediction must be, that *the Tribe of Judah* should have *Law-givers of their own to the very last Times*.

Q 2

4. FROM

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

4. FROM whatever *Radix* it is, that the Word *Shiloh* is deriv'd, both *Jews* and *Christians* are agreed in this, that, by the Person, to whom this Title is apply'd, the *Patriarch* intended the great Saviour of the World, who is call'd the *Messias*, or *Christ*.

5. BY *Judah* here, there is not an absolute Necessity to understand the People of that *Tribe* only, but all those likewise, who were afterwards call'd *Jews*. And, 6. Whether we refer the *Gathering* of the People to the *Tribe of Judah* (as they did in the Times of the *Captivity*) or to *Shiloh*, when he should come, as to the Main of the Prophecy, there is not a great deal of Difference; since the Main of the Prophecy is, — That the *Messias* should come, before the *Jewish Government* would totally cease. And therefore the Question is, whether there was any Form of Government, subsisting among the *Jews*, and particularly in the *Tribe of Judah*, at the Time when *Christ* was born.

THE Form of Government, which *Jacob*, upon his Death-bed, instituted, was that of dividing his Family into *Tribes*, and making his own, and the two Sons of *Joseph*, Heads over their respective Houses. This Government was properly *Aristocratical*: But, in Times of some extraordinary Exigence, all Authority was devolv'd into the Hands of a *Judge*, who, when the End, for which he was appointed, was effected, (in the same Manner as the *Roman Dictator* did) resign'd up his Power, and became no more than one of the *Princes of the Tribes of his Fathers*.

THE Abuse of this judicial Power however, in the Hands of *Samuel's* Sons, made the People desirous of a *regal* Government; and in that *Form* it continu'd, from the Time it came into *David's* Hand, (who was of the *Tribe of Judah*) for the Space of four hundred and seventy Years. The Division of the Kingdom made a great Alteration in the Fortunes of the *People*, for the *Assyrian Captivity* was the Ruin of the ten Tribes. They lost their Government, and from that Time never recover'd it; but it was not so with the Kingdom of *Judah*, in the *Babylonish*: (b) For, if we consider, that the *Jews* were carried to *Babylon*, not to be Slaves, but were transplanted as a *Colony*, to people that large City; that they were
commanded

(b) Bishop *Sherlock's* third Dissertation, annex'd to his Use and Intent of Prophecy.

commanded therefore, (i) by the Prophet, to *build Houses*, and *plant Gardens*, and to seek the *Peace of the City*, in which they were Captives; and, that upon the Expiration of their seventy Years Captivity, many of them were so well settled in Ease and Plenty, that they refus'd to return to their own Country again. If we consider farther, that the *Jews* liv'd at *Babylon* as a distinct People, and were govern'd, in their own Affairs, by their own Elders; that they appointed Feasts and Fasts, and order'd all other Matters relating to their Civil and Ecclesiastical State among themselves; and that, upon their Return from *Babylon*, they were thought a People considerable enough to be complain'd of to *Artaxerxes*: We cannot but conclude, that they made all along a Figure, far from comporting with the Condition of mere *Slaves*, subjected entirely to a foreign Yoke, without any Law, or Government of their own.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

AFTER the Time of this Captivity indeed, the *Jews* were never so free a People, as they had been before. They liv'd under the Subjection of the *Persian* Monarch, and under the Empire of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, to their last Destruction; but still they liv'd as a distinct People, govern'd by their own Laws; and the Authority of the *Persian*, and other Kings, over them, destroy'd not that *Rule*, which, in all the Vicissitudes that beset them, they still possess'd.

How the Case stood in the Time of the *Asmonæan* Princes, may be collected from several Passages in the *Maccabees*: And that the like Government subsisted, to the very Death of Christ, may, in like Manner, be evinc'd from many Instances in the *Gospel*; but one or two of these will be enough to illustrate the Thing.

WHEN our Saviour tells the *Jews*, (k) *The Truth shall make you free*, and they reply, *We are Abraham's Children, and were never in Bondage to any Man*, surely they had not forgot their Captivity in *Babylon*, much less could they be ignorant of the Power of the *Romans* over them at that Time; and yet they accounted themselves *free*, and so they were, because they liv'd by their own Laws, and executed Judgment among themselves. When our Saviour foretels his Disciples, that they (l) *should be*

Q 3

deliver'd

(i) Jer. xxix. 5, 7. (k) John viii. 32, 33. (l) Matth. x. 17.

A. M. deliver'd up to Councils, and scourg'd in Synagogues, he
 2276, &c. shews, at the same Time, what Power and Authority were
 Ant. Chris. exercis'd in the Councils, and Synagogues of the *Jews* :
 1728, &c. And (to mention but one Instance more) when *Pilate*, wil-
 From Gen. ling to deliver *Jesus*, says to the *Jews*, (m) *Take ye him,*
 xxxvii. to the and crucify him; and again, (n) *Take ye him, and judge*
 End. him according to your own Law; he likewise shews, that
 the *Jews* liv'd under their own Law, and had the Exercise
 of judicial Authority among themselves.

By this Deduction it appears evidently, that the *Sceptre*, plac'd in the Hand of *Judah*, by his Father *Jacob*, just before his Death, continu'd in his Posterity, till the very Death of Christ. From that Time all Things began to work towards the Destruction of the *Jewish* Polity, and, within a few Years, their City, Temple, and Government were utterly ruin'd, and the *Jews* not carry'd into a gentle Captivity, to enjoy their Laws, and live as a distinct People, in a foreign Country; but were sold, like Beasts in a Market, became Slaves in the strictest Sense, and, from that Day to this, have neither Prince, nor Lawgiver among them: So that, upon the Whole, (o) the Sense of *Jacob's* Prophecy, with relation to *Judah*, as it is now fulfill'd, may not improperly be summ'd up in this Paraphrase.

“ THE Power and Authority, which shall be establish'd
 “ in the Posterity of *Judah*, shall not be taken from them,
 “ or, at least, they shall not be destitute of Rulers and
 “ Governors; (no, not when they are in their declining
 “ Condition) until the Coming of the *Messiah*. But, when
 “ he is come, there shall be no Difference between the
 “ *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who shall be all obedient to the
 “ *Messiah*: And, after that, the Posterity of *Judah* shall
 “ have neither King, nor Ruler of their own, but their
 “ whole Common-wealth shall quite lose all Form, and
 “ never recover it again.”

How Jacob
 may be said
 to have taken
 a Tract of
 Land by
 Force of
 Arms.

THE Bequest, which *Jacob* makes to his Son *Joseph*, runs into this Form: — (p) *Moreover, I have given to thee one Portion above thy Brethren, which I took out of the Hand of the Amorite, with my Sword, and with my Bow. But when did we ever read of Jacob's being a military Man? His Sons indeed invaded Shechem, and took, not from the Amorites, but the Hivites, the adjacent Country,*

(m) John xix. 6.
 Commentary, in Loc.

(n) Chap. xviii. 31.
 (p) Gen. xlviii. 22.

(o) Patrick's

try, as we may suppose; but so far is he from approving of what they did, that, to his very dying Hour, we find him severely remonstrating against it, and must therefore be suppos'd too conscientious, either to retain himself, or to consign to his beloved Son, a Portion of Land, acquir'd by such wicked and sanguinary Means.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

THE Tract of Ground therefore, which he mentions, must certainly be that, (q) which he purchas'd of *Hamor*, the Father of *Shechem*; which he gave *Joseph* for a Burying-place, and where *Joseph*, in Consequence of that Donation, (r) was afterwards bury'd, and not in the Field of *Machpelah*, the common Repository of most of his Ancestors. And, to resolve the Difficulty of his Saying, that he took it from the Amorite by Force of Arms, when it is manifest that he bought it of *Hamor the Hivite*, for an hundred Pieces of Silver; we may observe, that the Persons, who are call'd *Hivites* in one Place, may, without any Impropriety, be call'd *Amorites* in another, for as much as the *Amorites*, being the chief of all the seven Nations in *Canaan*, might give Denomination to all the rest, in like Manner, as all the People of the *United Provinces* are, from the Pre-eminence of that one, commonly call'd *Hollanders*: And then, if we can but suppose, that, after *Jacob's* Departure from *Shechem*, for fear of the neighbouring Nations, some straggling *Amorites* came, and seiz'd on the Lands, which he had purchas'd, and that he was forc'd to have recourse to Arms, to expel the Invaders, and maintain his Right, all the Difficulty, or seeming Repugnance, of the Passage vanishes.

(s) *JACOB*, we allow, was a Man of Peace, but his Sons were Warriors; and to them he might the rather give Permission, to recover the Possession of what he had bought, because he look'd upon it, as an Earnest of his Posterity's future Possession of the whole Land. (t) And tho' we read nothing, in the foregoing History, either of the *Amorites* invading *Jacob's* Property, or of his expelling them thence; yet this is far from being the only Instance of Things being said to be done in Scripture, (u) whose Circumstances of Time, Place, and Persons, we find no where recorded; and a much easier Supposition it is, than to make

Q 4

(as

(q) Gen. Chap. xxxiii. 19. compar'd with Josh. xxiv. 32.
(r) Josh. xxiv. 32. (s) *Pool's* Annotations. (t) *Patrick's* Commentary. (u) To this Purpose, see Gen. xlviii. 22. Deut. ii. 9, 10, 11. Jos. xxiv. 11.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

(as some have done) the *Sword and the Bow*, here mention'd, to signify the *Money*, wherewith he purchas'd this small Territory.

Jacob's Pro-
phesies, or
Blessings to
his Sons vin-
dicated.

JACOB is the first, that we read of, who particularly declar'd the future State of every one of his Sons, when he left the World; but it has been an antient Opinion, that the Souls of excellent Men, the nearer they approach to their Departure hence, the more *divine* they grew, had a clearer Prospect of Things to come, and (as (*x*) *Xenophon* makes *Cyrus* speak) *at the Point of Death, became prophetick*. Though therefore the last Words, which we find our Patriarch uttering to his Sons, may be rather accounted *Prophesies*, than *Benedictions*; yet since the Text assures us, that (*y*) *he blessed every one with a separate Blessing*, we may fairly infer, that, though he found Reason to rebuke the three *eldest* very sharply; yet, if his Rebukes, and the Punishment pronounc'd against them, had the good Effect to bring them to a due Sense of their Transgressions, it was a Blessing to them, tho' not a *temporal one*; though, even in this last Sense, it cannot be said, but that he blessed *them* likewise, since he assign'd each of them a Lot, in the Inheritance of the promis'd Land, which it was in his Power to have depriv'd them of.

HOWEVER this be, (*z*) 'tis certain that all impartial Critics have observ'd, that the Style of these Blessings, or Prophecies (call them which we will) is much more *lofty*, than what we meet with in the other Parts of this Book; and therefore some have imagin'd, that *Jacob* did not deliver these very Words, but that *Moses* put the Sense of what he said into such *poetical* Expressions. But to me it seems more reasonable to think, that, the Spirit of Prophecy, now coming upon the good old Patriarch, rais'd his Diction, as well as Sentiments; even as *Moses* himself is found to have deliver'd (*a*) his *Benedictions* in a Strain more sublime, than what occurs in his other Writings.

'Tis true, indeed, that, in the *Predictions* of the Patriarch, as well as in the *Benedictions* of *Moses*, several *Comparisons* do occur, which are taken from brute Animals. Thus *Judah* is compar'd to a *Lion*, *Issachar* to an *Ass*, *Dan* to a *Serpent*, *Benjamin* to a *Wolf*, and *Naphtali* to an *Hind let loose*: But this is so far from being a Disparagement to the *prophetick* Spirit, that it is a Commendation of

(*x*) Lib. 8.
mentary.

(*y*) Gen. xlix. 28.
(*a*) Deut. xxxiii.

(*z*) *Patrick's* Com-

of it; since, if the *Lion* be a proper Emblem of *Power* and *Strength*; if the *Ass* be an Image of *Labour* and *Patience*; if the *Serpent*, an Hieroglyphick of *Guile* and *Subtily*; if the *Wolf*, a Symbol of *Violence* and *Outrage*; and if an *Hind* let loose be no bad Representation of a People loving Liberty and Freedom; then were these *Qualities*, which nothing but a divine Spirit cou'd foresee, abundantly specify'd (as their respective Histories shew) in the Posterity of the several Heads of Tribes, to which they are applied.

AND, as these Comparisons are a Kind of Testimony of the divine Inspiration of the holy Patriarch upon this Occasion, so are they far from being any Diminution of the Dignity of the Subject, he was then treating of; since a Man must be a Stranger to all Compositions of this Kind, who is not persuaded, that *Comparisons*, taken from the *Animal World*, are, as it were, the *Sinews* and Support of what we call the *Sublime*; and who finds not himself less inclin'd to cavil at *Jacob's* Manner of Expression, when he perceives the lofty *Homer* comparing his Heroes so frequently to a Lion, a Wolf, an Ass, a Torrent, or a Tree, according to the Circumstances he places them in, or the different Point of Light, wherein he thinks proper to take them. And I mention it as an Argument of the Truth and Excellency of the *Mosaick* History, that we find its Author adhering to the *original Simplicity*, and pursuing that very Method of Writing, which was certainly in Vogue, when the most antient Books, that we know any Thing of, were compos'd.

MOSES's Method of Writing (as we have had Occasion, more than once, to take notice) is very *succinct*; and therefore when he tells us, that, upon *Joseph's* coming into *Egypt*, and being sold to *Potiphar*, *Captain of the Guard*, he commenc'd Steward of his Household, we must not suppose, that there did not a sufficient Space of Time intervene to qualify him for that Office. What therefore some of the *Jewish* Doctors tell us, seems not improbable, *viz.* that his Master, as soon as he bought him, sent him to *School*, and had him instructed, not in the Language only, but in all the Learning of the *Egyptians*. However this be, 'tis certain, that there is no small Affinity between the *Hebrew* and *Egyptian* Tongue; so that a Person of good natural Parts, and of an Age the fittest that cou'd be for learning any Thing, might, with a little Diligence and Application, make himself Master of it, in a very short Time.

JOSEPH

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

JOSEPH indeed, as we may observe, talk'd to his Brethren by an *Interpreter*; and that he might do, tho' the Difference between the two Tongues was not very great. (b) A *Frenchman*, we see, is not understood at first by an *Italian*, or *Spaniard*, tho' all the three Languages are deriv'd from the same Original; but, when once he is let into the Knowledge of this, and comes to perceive their different *Formations* and *Constructions*, what was *foreign* to him before, soon becomes *familiar*. And, in like Manner, *Joseph*, with a small Matter of Instruction, and some Observation of his own, might be let into the Secret of the *Egyptian* Language, the Nature of their *Accounts* and the Customs of the Country, and so become every way qualify'd to give the Content, we find he did, in the Place to which he was advanc'd.

In what
Sense Poti-
phar, tho' a
married
Man, is
call'd an
Eunuch.

(c) THE Notion, that we have of an *Eunuch*, is a Person, who has lost his *Virility*; and therefore to assign him a Wife, (as we find *Potiphar* had a very naughty one) may seem a manifest Incongruity; but for this there is an easy Solution to be given. The Word *Saris* indeed denotes equally an *Eunuch*, and any *Court Minister*; and the Reason of this Ambiguity is, — That, as *Eastern Kings*, for their greater Security, were wont to have Slaves, who were *castrated*, to attend the Chambers of their Wives and Concubines, and, upon Proof of their Fidelity, did frequently advance them to the other *Court-Employments*, such as being *Privy-Councillors*, *High-Chamberlains*, *Captains* of their Guards, &c. it hence came to pass, that the Title of *Eunuch* was conferr'd on any, who were promoted to those Posts of Honour and Trust, even though they were not *emasculated*. And indeed, when we read, in the Book of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, so frequent Mention made of *Eunuchs* about the Person of *David*, and other *Jewish* Princes, we must be far from supposing, that these were all *Eunuchs* in Reality, since it was unlawful, (d) according to their *Historian*, in that Nation, to *castrate* even a domestick Animal; and according to the Institution of their Law, an express Prohibition it was, that (e) *he, who had his privy Members cut off, should not enter into the Congregation of the Lord*.

BOTH

(b) *Le Clerc's* Commentary, in Gen. xlii. 23. (c) *Heidegger's* Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 20. (d) *Joseph. Antiq.* l. 4. c. 8. (e) Deut. xxiii. 1.

BOTH the *Arabick* Version, and the Targum of *Onkelos*, are therefore very right, in rendering the Word, a Prince, or Minister of Pharaoh: For, if we compare the several Parts of his History, we shall find, (f) that Potiphar had the chief Command of the Forces, that guarded the Person and Palace-Royal; that, as such, he presided in all Courts, and Causes, that had a more immediate Relation to these; that he had Power, under the King, of judging and deciding all Cases within those Walls, of imprisoning and releasing, of Life and Death, and of hastening or suspending the Execution of capital Punishments.

AND, if Potiphar was a Person invested with all this Authority, it may seem a little strange, why he did not immediately put Joseph to Death; since, had his Wife's Accusation been true, his Crime deserv'd no less a Punishment: But whether it was, that Joseph had found Means to vindicate himself, by the Mediation of the Keeper of the Prison, who was Potiphar's Deputy, tho' there is no Account of it in Scripture; or God, in Behalf of the Righteous, might interpose to mollify the Heart of this great Man, and restrain his Hand from doing Violence; the Issue of the Matter shews, that he was, in a short Time, convinc'd of his Innocence, or otherwise, it cannot be believ'd, that he wou'd have suffer'd him to be made so easy, and to be invested with so much Power, in the Prison; tho', at the same Time, he might not think proper to release him, for fear that so publick an Acquittment might bring Disreputation both to his Wife and himself.

JOSEPH cou'd not but foresee, that to live in the Palaces of Kings, and to accept of high Posts and Honours, wou'd be very hazardous to his Virtue, (g) But, when he perceiv'd the Hand of Providence so visible in raising him, by Ways and Means so very extraordinary, to Eminence, and an Office wherein he wou'd have it in his Power to be beneficial to so very many, he could not refuse the Offers, which the King made him, without being rebellious to the Will and Destination of God. To him therefore, who had secur'd him hitherto, he might, in this Case, commit the Custody of his Innocence, and accept of the usual Ensigns of Honour, without incurring the Censure of Vanity or Ostentation.

AND,

(f) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on Gen. Vol. II. Occas. Annot. 39.
(g) *Heidegger's Hist. Patriarch.* Vol. II. Exer. 20.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Why he did
not immediately kill
Joseph.

Why Joseph
might accept
of Honours
from Pharaoh.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

And marry
an Egyptian
Woman.

AND, tho' in After-Ages, all Marriages with Infidels were certainly prohibited; yet there ſeems to be, at this Time, a certain *Dispensation* current, for as much as *Judah*; to be ſure, if not more of *Joſeph's* Brethren, had done the ſame: Beſides that, in *Joſeph's* Caſe, there was ſomething peculiar. (b) For, as he was in a ſtrange Country, he had not an Opportunity of making his Addreſſes to any of the Daughters of the Seed of *Abraham*; as the Match was of the King's making, he was not at Liberty to decline it, without forfeiting his Pretenſions to the Royal Favour, and conſequently to the Means of doing ſo much Good; and, as it is not improbable, that he might be adviſ'd to it by a particular Revelation, ſo it is highly reaſonable to believe, that he converted his Wife, at leaſt, to the Worſhip of the true God, before he eſpous'd her: Even tho' there ſhou'd be nothing in that Opinion of the *Rabbins*, that he made a *Proſelyte* likewise of her Father, the *Prieſt of On*, (who could not but be deſirous to purchaſe, at any Rate, ſo advantageous an Alliance) and took this Occaſion to eſta- bliſh the Rite of *Circumciſion*, if not in all *Egypt*, at leaſt among Perſons of the ſacred Order, who, (according to the Account of thoſe, who wrote the Hiſtory of that Country) in very early Days, certainly were not without it.

That he was
not accus-
tom'd to
ſwear.

SOME may imagine, that, the better to perſonate an *Egyptian* Lord, and thereby conceal himſelf from his Brethren, or rather to comply with the Language of the Court in this Particular, *Joſeph* ſwore by the *Life of Pharaoh*, in the ſame Manner, as the *Romans*, in Adulation to their Emperor, were wont to ſwear by his *Genius*. It muſt be acknowledg'd indeed, that, as every Oath is a ſolemn Appeal to God, to ſwear by any *Creature* whatever muſt needs be an impious and idolatrous Act; and therefore the proper Solution of this Matter is, — not that Oaths of this Kind were allowable before the Inſtitution of *Chriſtianity*, but that *Joſeph*, in making uſe of theſe Words, did not ſwear at all. (i) For, ſince every Oath implies in it either an *Invocation* of ſome Witneſs, or a *Poſtulation* of ſome *Revenge*, (as our great *Sanderſon* terms it) to ſay that *Joſeph* appeal'd to the *Life of Pharaoh*, as a Witneſs, is ridiculous; and, without a very forc'd Conſtruction indeed, the Words can never be ſuppos'd to include in them a *Curſe*; and therefore their moſt eaſy Signification muſt be, what we call *indicative*: By the *Life of Pharaoh*, i. e. as ſure and certain as *Pharaoh* liveth,

ye

(b) Heidegger, *ibid.* (i) *Sanderſon's* Prælec. 5. § 7.

ye are Spies; just as we say, *By the Sun, that shines, I* A. M. 2276, &c.
Speak Truth, i. e. as sure as the *Sun* shines; neither of which Ant. Chriſt. 1728, &c.
 can, with any Propriety, be call'd *Oaths*, but only vehement Affeuerations. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End.

THE Words which *Joseph's* Steward, sent to apprehend his Brethren, makes use of, are, *(k)* *Is not this the Cup, in which my Lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth?* That he did not praſeife Divination, tho' he ſeems to pretend to it. and the Words, wherein *Joseph* accoſts them, when they are brought before him, are, *(l)* *What Deed is this that ye have done? Wot ye not that ſuch a Man, as I, can certainly divine?* And from hence *(m)* ſome have imagin'd, that *Joseph* was a Perſon addicted to *magical Arts*, and, by Virtue of this ſingle Cup, could diſcover ſtrange and wonderful Things. But, in Answer to this, others have obſerv'd, *(n)* that the Word *Nafhab*, which we render to *divine*, was formerly of an indefinite Senſe, and meant in general to *diſcover* or *make a Trial of*; and, accordingly, they have devis'd a double Acceptation of the Steward's Words, as if he ſhould ſay,——*By this Cup* (viz. left in a careleſs and negligent Manner) *my Maſter was minded to make an Experiment, whether you were Thieves, or honeſt Men, or ſay,*——*By this Cup, wherein he drinketh, my * Maſter diſcovers and finds out the Temper and Diſpoſitions of Men, when they are in Liquor.* But both of theſe Senſes ſeem a little too much forc'd, and are far from agreeing with the other Words of *Joseph*.

IT muſt be acknowledg'd therefore, that, as *magical Arts* of divers Kinds were in uſe among the *Egyptians*, many Years before *Joseph's* Time of coming thither; and that, as *Joseph*, by his wonderful Skill of interpreting Dreams, had gain'd a great Reputation for Knowledge, and, perhaps, among the Populace, might paſs for a *Diviner*; he took an Occaſion from hence, in order to carry on his Deſign, to aſſume a *Character*, that did not belong to him. There is no Reason however to infer from the Words, that * the Art

(k) Gen. xliv. 5. *(l)* Ver. 15. *(m)* Vid. *Saurin's* Diſſertation 38. *(n)* *Pool's* Annotations, and *Patrick's* Commentary.

* What may ſeem to give ſome ſmall Sanction to this Senſe, is that known Paſſage in *Horace*.

Reges dicuntur multis urgere cucullis,

Et tentaremero, quem perſpexiſſe laborant,

An ſit amicitia dignus.

De Arte Poet.

* *Julius Serenus* tells us, that the Method of *divining by the Cup*,

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxviii. to
the End,

Art of *divining by the Cup*, (as it came afterwards to be practis'd) was then in use in *Egypt*; (o) because the Words before us (according to the Sense of the best Interpreters) do not relate to this Cup, as the *Instrument*, but as the *Subject* of Divination; not as the Thing, *with which*, but as the Thing, *concerning which* this magical Enquiry was to be made. And so the Sense of the Steward's Words will be, "How could you think, but that my Lord, who is so great a Man at *Divination*, would use the best of his Skill to find out the Persons, who had robb'd him of the Cup, which he so much prizes?" And this tallies exactly with the subsequent Words of *Joseph*, *Wot ye not that such a Man, as I*, "I, who have rais'd myself to this Eminence, by my Interpretation of Dreams, and may therefore well be accounted an *Adept* in all other Sciences, should be long at a Loss to know, who the Persons were, that had taken away my Cup?" This seems to be the natural Sense of the Words; the only one, indeed, that they will fairly bear: (p) And tho' they do not imply, that *Joseph* was actually a *Magician*, yet they seem to justify the Notions of those Men, who think, that he carry'd his *Disimulation* to his Brethren so far, as to make them believe that he really had some Knowledge that Way.

Was not un-
kind to his
Father, or
Brethren.

THE *Royal Psalmist*, in his Description of the Sufferings of *Joseph*, (q) tells us, that he was not only sold to be a *Bond-servant*, but that *his Feet were hurt in the Stocks, and Iron*

Cup, among the *Assyrians*, *Chaldees*, and *Egyptians*, was to fill it first with Water, then to throw it into thin Plates of Gold and Silver, together with some precious Stones, whereon were engraven certain Characters; and, after that, the Persons, who came to consult the *Oracle*, us'd certain Forms of *Incantation*, and so calling upon the *Devil*, were wont to receive their Answers several Ways. Sometimes by *articulate Sounds*; sometimes by the *Characters*, which were in the Cup, rising upon the Surface of the Water, and, by their Arrangement, forming the Answer; and, many Times, by the visible Appearing of the Persons themselves, about whom the Oracle was consulted. *Cornelius Agrippa* [de occult. Philos. l. i. c. 57.] tells us likewise, that the Manner of some was, to pour melted Wax into the Cup, wherein was Water, which Wax would range itself in Order, and so form Answers, according to the Questions propos'd. *Saurin's Dissertation* 38. and *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar. Exercit.* 20.

(o) *Heidegger's Hist. Patriar. Vol. II. Exercit. 20.* (p) *Saurin's Dissertations.* (q) *Psal. cv. 17. 18.*

Iron entered into his Soul, which signifies, at least, that he endur'd very hard Usage, before *the Time came that his Cause was known*, and his Innocence discover'd; and of all this his Brethren, when they sold him into Slavery, were properly the Occasions. So that, could we conceive, that any angry Resentments could harbour in a Breast so fully satisfy'd of a divine Providence in all this Dispensation, we might have imagin'd, that *Joseph* took this Opportunity to *retaliate* the Injuries, which were formerly done to him; but this he did not. He desir'd indeed to be inform'd in the Circumstances of their Family, without asking any *direct* Question; and therefore he mentions his Suspicion of their being *Spies*, merely to *fish out* of them (as we call it) whether his *aged* Father, and his *younger* Brother were yet alive. For, upon their Return, we may perceive (especially considering that it is the *first Minister* of a mighty State, that speaks to a Company of poor indigent Shepherds) a wonderful Tenderness in his Expressions: (r) *Is your Father well; the old Man, of whom ye spake, is he still alive?* besides the Instructions, which he plainly gave his Steward to bid them be of good Cheer. When he understood that his Father and Brother were both alive, and, as yet, had not Matters prepar'd for the Removal of his Father and Family, the Eagerness of his Affections may perhaps be thought to have carry'd him a little too far, in demanding his Brother to be brought to him; but we are not to doubt but that *Joseph*, by the divine Spirit, wherewith he was endow'd, did certainly foresee what would happen, (s) and that his Father's grieving a little Time for *Benjamin* wou'd be so far from endangering his Health, that it would only increase his Joy, when he saw him again, and dispose him the better for the Reception of the welcome News of his own Advancement in *Egypt*; which, had it come all upon him at once, and on a sudden, might have been enough to have bereav'd him of his Senses, if not of his Life itself, by a *Surfeit* of Joy.

UPON their second Dismission, after a very kind Entertainment, it may be thought perhaps a Piece of Cruelty in *Joseph*, to have his Cup convey'd (of all others) into *Benjamin's* Sack, and thereupon to threaten to make him a *Bond-Slave*, for a pretended *Felony*: But herein was *Joseph's* great Policy, and Nicety of Judgment. He himself had been severely treated by the rest, when he was young, and therefore was minded to make an Experiment, in what Manner

(r) Gen. xliii. 7. (s) Universal History, l. i. c. 7.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Manner they would now behave towards his Brother; whether they would forsake him in his Distress, and give him up to be a *Bond-slave*, as they had sold *him* for one; or whether they would stand by him in all Events, make Intercession for his Release, or adventure to share his Fate.

THIS, perhaps, may be thought his carrying the Matter a little too far: But, without this Conduct, *Joseph* cou'd not have known, whether his Brethren rightly deserv'd the Favour and Protection, which he might then design, and afterwards granted them. Without this Conduct, we had not had perhaps the most lively Images, that are to be met with in Scripture, of *injur'd Innocence*, of Meekness and Forbearance, and the *Triumphs* of a good Conscience, in him; and of the Fears and Terrors, the Convictions and *Self-condemnations* of long conceal'd Guilt in them. Without this Conduct, we had not had this lovely Portraiture of paternal Tenderneſs, as well as brotherly Affection; we had never had those solemn, sad, and melting Words of *Jacob*, (t) *If I am bereav'd of my Children, I am bereav'd*, enough to pierce a tender Parent's Heart; or those others, (u) *Joseph is yet alive, I will see him before I die*, enough to raise it into Joy and Exultation again. In a Word, without this Conduct, we had never had that *courteous*, that *moving*, that *pleasingly mournful* Speech, wherein *Moses* makes *Judah* address *Joseph*, in Behalf of his poor Brother *Benjamin*, which exceeds all the Compositions of human Invention, and * flows indeed from such *natural* Passions, as Art can never imitate.

(t) Gen. xliii. 14.

(u) Chap. xlv. 28.

* The Observation of a learned Author upon the *Dialogue* between *Jacob* and his Sons, as well as the Speech of *Judah*, is well worth our Notice, and serious Consideration. " Since
" such Passages are related by Men, who affect no Art, and
" who liv'd long after the Parties, who first utter'd them, we
" cannot conceive, how all Particulars cou'd be so naturally and
" fully recorded, unless they had been suggested by his Spirit,
" who gives Mouth and Speech to Man; who, being alike present to all Successions, is able to communicate the secret
" Thoughts of Forefathers to their Children, and put the very
" Words of the Deceas'd (never register'd before) into the
" Mouths, or Pens of their Successors, for many Generations
" after, and that, as exactly and distinctly, as if they had been
" caught, in Characters of Steel or Brass, as they issu'd out of
" their Mouths: For it is plain, every Circumstance is here re-
" lated,

imitate. So that, upon a Review of his whole Conduct, A. M. 2276, &c. Ant. Chris. 1728, &c. From Gen. xxxvii. to the End. *Joseph* is so far from deserving Blame, that all this seeming Rigour and Imperiousness of his did eventually produce a great deal of Good; and was, in Reality, no more, than the Heightening the Distress, or thickening the Plot (as we call it in a Play) to make the *Discovery*, or future Felicity, he intended his Family, more conspicuous and agreeable.

It must be acknowledg'd indeed, that *Moses* has done Justice to the History of *Joseph*, and employ'd most of the tender Passions of human Nature to give it a better Grace; but we must not therefore infer, either that he hath transcend- ed Truth, or committed an Error, in recording the Quality of the Persons, employ'd to embalm his Father. What has led some into a great Mistake concerning the Origin of *Physick*, and that it was of no Vogue in the World until the Days of *Hippocrates*, was the great Superiority of Skill and Genius, which he demonstrated, both in his Practice and Writings. The Truth is, the *Divine old Man* (as (x) one expresses it) did so totally eclipse all, who went before him, that, as Posterity esteem'd his Works the *Canon*, so did it look upon him as the great *Father* of Medicine. But if we will credit the Testimony of (y) *Galen*, (who tho' a late Writer, was a very competent Judge) we shall find, that he was far from being the first of his Profession, even among the *Greeks*.

HOMER indeed, in his Poem of the *Trojan War*, seems to have cut out more Work for *Surgeons*, than *Physicians*; and therefore we find the chief of the *Faculty* only employ'd * in healing Wounds, extracting Arrows, preparing Anodynes, and other such like external Operations; but, if we look into his other Work, which is of a more *pa-cifick* Strain, we shall soon discern the Use of internal Appli- cations,

“ lated, with such natural *Specifications*, (as he terms it) as if
“ *Moses* had heard them talk; and therefore cou'd not have
“ been thus represented to us, unless they had been written by
“ his divine Direction, who knows all Things, as well forepast,
“ as present, or to come.” Dr. *Jackson* on the Creed, l. 1.
“ c. 4.

(x) *Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses*, Vol. II. lib. 4.

(y) *Meth. Medic. lib. 1.*

* Ἰητροὺς γὰρ ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀνιάξει ἄλλω.

Ἰὲς τ' ἐκλάμυνεν ἐπὶ τ' ἡπιῇ φάρμακα πάσσειν. *Iliad. XI.*
VOL. II. R

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxvii. to
the End.

cations, when we find * *Helen* brought in, as giving *Telemachus* a Preparation of Opium, which (as the Poet informs us) ſhe had from *Polydamna*, the Wife of *Thon*, an *Egyptian* Phyſician of great Note. And well might the Phyſicians of *Egypt* be held in great Eſteem, “ when (as “ *Herodotus* relates the Matter) every diſtinct Diſtemper “ had its proper Phyſician, who confin’d himſelf to the Stu- “ dy and Cure of that only; ſo that, one Sort having the “ Cure of the Eyes, another of the Head, another of the “ Teeth, another of the Belly, and another of occult Diſ- “ eaſes, we need not wonder, that all Places were crowded “ with Men of this Profeſſion, or that the Phyſicians of “ *Joſeph’s* Houſhold ſhou’d be repreſented as a large Num- “ ber.” True it is indeed, that theſe Phyſicians (and the very beſt of them) were employ’d in embalming the Dead; but then there was a wiſe Deſignation in this, viz. (z) not only to improve them in the Knowledge of *Anatomy*, but to enable them likewiſe to diſcover the Cauſes of ſuch Diſorders, as were a Baffle to their Art. And therefore, it was the Cuſtom of the Kings of *Egypt*, (as *Pliny* informs us) to cauſe dead Bodies to be diſſected, on Purpoſe to find out the Origin and Nature of all Diſeaſes. Thus it appears from the concurring Teſtimony of other Hiſtorians, that the Practice of Phyſick was a common Thing in *Egypt*, as early as the Days of *Joſeph*; that the Multitude of its Profeſſors makes it no ſtrange Thing, his having a Number of them in his Family; and that the Nature of the Thing, as well as the Order of the State, oblig’d the very beſt of them to become *Diſſecters* and *Embalmers*.

Joſeph’s
publick Ma-
nagement.

THIS may ſerve for a Vindication of what the Sacred Hiſtorian has related of our *Patriarch* in his *private* Life, and we come now to conſider him in his *publick* Capacity. As ſoon as he had foretold the King the long Famine, that was to befall *Egypt*, he gave him Advice to have the *ſiſth* Part of the Product of the Country laid up in Store againſt the enſuing Want. The *tenth* Part, (according to the Conſtitution of the Nation) belong’d to the King already, and to adviſe him to purchaſe as much more, for ſeven ſucceeding Years,

was

* Τοῖα Διδὸς θυγάτης ἔχε φάρμακα μηϊόεντα
Ἑσθλά, τὰ οἱ Πολύδαμνα πόρεν Θῶντι παράκοιλις
Ἀιγυμλίη, τῇ πλεῖστα φέρει ζείδωρο ἄεθρα
Φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν Ἑσθλά μεμιγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά.
Ἰηρὸς δὲ ἕκαστος ἐπιτάμειντο περὶ πάντων
Ἀνθρώπων —————

Odyſſ. Lib. iv.

(z) *Warburton*, *ibid.*

was to consider him as the *publick Father* of his People, for whose Support and Welfare he was concern'd to provide. When himself was appointed to the Office of gathering in the Corn, he took Care, no doubt, to have his *Granaries* in fortify'd Places, and, as the Scarceness increas'd, to have them secur'd by a Guard of the King's Forces, to prevent Insurrections and Depredations. When he came to open his *Storehouses*, he sold to the Poor and to the Rich; and was it not highly reasonable that he, who bought the Corn, shou'd likewise sell it; or that the Money, which, by the King's Commission and Order, had been laid out for such a Stock of Provisions against the approaching Necessities of his Subjects, shou'd return to the King's Coffers again, to answer his Occasions? When their Money was gone, they brought him their Cattle; but this they did of their own Accord, without any Compulsion or Circumvention; and might he not as legally exchange Corn for Cattle, as he did it for Money before? His Corn he kept up perhaps at an high Rate; but had he sold it *cheap*, or given it *gratis*, the People, very likely, would have been profuse, and wanton in the Consumption of it; whereas his great Care and Concern was, to make it hold out the whole Time of the *Famine*. He oblig'd the Inhabitants of one City and District to remove, or make Room for those of another; but this he might do, not so much to shew their Subjection to *Pharaoh*, as to secure the publick Peace, by disabling them, in this Way, from entering into any seditious Measures and Combinations.

It cannot be imagin'd indeed, but that in a Time of such general Want and Calamity, Men's Minds would be ripe for Rapine, Violence, and Mutiny; and yet we meet with no one Commotion, during the whole Period of his *critical* Ministry, which bespeaks the Skill of the *Mariner*, when he is found able to *steer* steady in the Midst of so tumultuous a Sea. In fine, after he had a long while executed his high Trust, and the Years of Famine were come to a Conclusion, he gave the People back their Liberties and Estates, reserving to the King no more, than a double *Tenth* out of the Produce of their Lands, as a *Tribute* of their Vassalage; which, considering the Richness of the Soil, and the little Pains requir'd in cultivating it, was an Imposition, far from being burthen some to the Subject, or vastly disproportionate to the Benefit they had receiv'd.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

And favour-
ing the
Priests vin-
dicated.

THERE is but one Thing more, that I find objected to *Joseph* in this publick Station, (a) and that is, his Favour and Indulgence to the *Priests*, (and *Priests* that were *Idolaters*) in sparing their Lands, and laying no Tax upon them.

THE *Jewish* Doctors have a Tradition, that, when *Joseph* was in Prison, and his Master had bad Designs against him, it was by the Interest of the *Priests*, that he was set free, and that, consequently, in Gratitude, he could not do less, than indulge them with some particular Marks of his Favour, when he came into such a Compass of Power. But there is no Occasion for any such Fiction as this. (b) The *Priests* of *Egypt* were taken out of the chief Families of the Nation: They were Persons of the first Quality; were consulted upon all publick Affairs of Consequence; and, upon a Vacancy, generally some One of them succeeded to the Crown. It was not likely therefore, that Persons of their high Rank and Station wanted *Joseph's* Assistance, to strengthen their Interest, for the obtaining of any *Immunities*; nor is it apparent that they had it. On the contrary, it seems evident from the *Text*, that whatever peculiar Favours they were vouchsafed, proceeded all, not from *Joseph's* Good-will, but from the King's immediate Direction and Appointment: For the *Land of the Priests* bought he not, says *Moses* (*Gi chok le cohanim meeth Pharaoh*) because *Pharaoh* had made a Decree expressly against it, or, (in Analogy to our *Translation*) because there was an Appointment for the *Priests*, even from *Pharaoh*; and the *Portion*, which he gave them, they did eat, and therefore sold not their *Lands*.

WHY *Pharaoh*, when he thought fit to lessen the Property of his common Subjects, did not, at the same Time, attempt to reduce the exorbitant Riches of the *Priests*, we may, in some Measure, account for, if we consider, that, according to the Constitution of the Kingdom, the *Egyptian* *Priests* were oblig'd to provide all Sacrifices, and to bear all the Charges of the national Religion, which, in those Days, was not a little expensive; so very *expensive*, that we find, in Countries where the Soil was not fruitful, and consequently the People poor, Men did not well know how to bear the Burden of Religion; and therefore *Lycurgus*, when he reform'd the *Lacedemonian* State, instituted Sacrifices, the meanest and cheapest that he could think of. But *Egypt*, we know, was a rich and fertile Country, and therefore, in all Probability,

(a) Lord *Shaftesbury's* Characteristicks, Vol. III. Miscel. 3.
(b) *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 7.

bility, the King and People being desirous that Religion should appear with a suitable Splendor, made Settlements upon the Priests from † the very first Institution of Government among them, answerable to the Charges of their Function. Add to this, that the Priests of *Egypt* were the whole Body of the Nobility of the Land; that they were the King's Counsellors and Assistants, in all the Affairs which concern'd the Publick; (c) were *joint Agents* with him in some Things, and, in others, his *Directors* and *Instructors*. Add again, that they were the Professors and Cultivators of *Astronomy*, *Geometry*, and other useful Sciences; that they were the Keepers of the publick Registers, Memoirs, and Chronicles of the Kingdom; and, in a Word, that, under the King, they were the supreme Magistrates, and fill'd all prime Offices of Honour and Trust: And, considering them under these Views, we may possibly allow, that *Pharaoh* might think that they had not too much to support the Station they were to act in, and, for that Reason, order'd that no *Tax* shou'd be rais'd upon them.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to the
End.

THUS we have endeavour'd to clear the *sacred History* from all Imputations of Improbability or Absurdity, as well as *Joseph's* Conduct, both *private* and *publick*, from all unjust Censure, during this Period of Time; and may now produce the Testimony of several *Heathen Writers*, in Confirmation of sundry Particulars related herein.

The Testimony of Heathen Writers, concerning these Things.

THAT the Memory of *Joseph*, and of the wonderful Benefits he did, during the Time of his Administration, was preserv'd among the *Egyptians*, under the Worship of *Apis*, *Serapis*, and *Osiris*; that the *Egyptian* Manner of interpreting Dreams was taken from what occurs in his History; and that the *Charistia* (mention'd by (d) *Valerius* and (e) *Ovid*) viz. Festival Entertainments, either for confirming *Friendship*, or renewing it, when *broken*, were Transcripts of the *Feast*, which *Joseph* made for his Brethren, is the general Opinion of such learned Men, as have made the deepest Enquiry into these Matters.

R 3

THAT

† It is the Opinion of some, that *Mizraim*, the Founder of the *Egyptian* Monarchy, might, in Memory of some *Noachical* Tradition, set apart, at the very first, a Maintenance for the *Priesthood*, however degenerate and corrupt. Be this as it will, 'tis certain, that, in Process of Time, their Allotment increas'd to such a Degree, that they became Possessors of one third Part of the whole Land, according to *Diodorus*, l. 1.

(c) *Diodorus Siculus*, l. 1. (d) *Lib. ii. c. 1.* (e) *De Fast. l. 2.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

THAT the Patriarch *Jacob* went down with his whole Family into *Egypt*, where he found his Son *Joseph* in great Power and Prosperity, is reported by several Pagan Writers, who are cited (f) by *Eusebius*. That the *Egyptians*, (according to what *Moses* tells of them) had an unaccountable Antipathy to *Shepherds*, especially *Foreigners*, is related (g) by *Herodotus*. That the Priests in that Country enjoy'd several high Privileges, and were exempted from paying all Taxes and publick Imposts, is every where apparent (h) from *Diodorus*: And, that *Joseph* was just such a Person, as *Moses* has represented him, the Testimony (i) of *Justin* (with which we conclude the Patriarch's Story) is enough to convince us. *Joseph*, the youngest of his Brethren, says he, had a Superiority of Genius, which made them fear him, and sell him to foreign Merchants, who carry'd him into *Egypt*, where he practis'd the Magick Art with such Success, as render'd him very dear to the King. He had a great Sagacity in the Explanation of Prodigies, and Dreams; nor was there any Thing so abstruse, either in divine or human Knowledge, that he did not readily attain. He foretold a great Dearth, several Years before it happen'd, and prevented a Famine's falling upon *Egypt*, by advising the King to publish a Decree, requiring the People to make Provision for divers Years. His Knowledge, in short, was so great, that the *Egyptians* listen'd to the Prophecies coming from his Mouth, as if they had proceeded, not from Man, but from God himself.

DISSERTATION IV.

Of the Person and Book of JOB.

The Person
and Book of
Job real.

THAT *Job* was a real Person, and not a fictitious Character, and his Story Matter of Fact, and not a parabolical Representation, * is manifest from all those Places,

(f) Prepar. Evang. l. 9.

(g) Lib. ii. c. 47.

(h) Lib. i.

(i) Lib. xxxvi. c. 2.

* Nay, upon the Supposition that the whole Book were a Dramatic Composition, this wou'd not invalidate the Proofs, which we have from Scripture, of the real Existence of this holy Patriarch, or the Truth of his exemplary Story. On the contrary, it much confirms them; seeing it was the general Practice of Dramatic Writers, of the serious Kind, to chuse any illustrious Character, and well known Story, in order to give

ces, in Scripture, where Mention is made of him: And therefore, when, in the *Old Testament*, we find *Job* put in Company with *Noah*, and *Daniel*, and equally distinguish'd for his *Righteousness*, as, in the *New*, he is commended for his *Patience*; we cannot well suppose, that the Spirit of God, in both these Places, intended to delude us with a *Phantom*, instead of presenting us with a *real Man*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

WHETHER we allow that the Book of *Job* is of *divine Revelation*, or not, we cannot but perceive, that it has in it all the *Lineaments* of a *real History*; since the Name, the Quality, the Country of the Man, the Number of his Children, the Bulk of his Substance, and the Pedigree of his Friends, together with the *Names* and *Situations* of several Regions, can give us the Idea of nothing else: Tho' it must not be dissembled, that, in the *Introduction* more especially, there is an *allegorical Turn* given to some Matters, which (as they relate to *spiritual Beings*) would not otherwise so easily affect the Imagination of the Vulgar.

(k) *JOB*, according to the fairest Probability, was, in a direct Line, * descended from *Abraham* by his Wife *Keturah*.

His Family.

R 4

rab:

give the Piece its due Dignity and Efficacy: And yet, (what is very surprizing) the Writers on both Sides, as well those, who hold the Book of *Job* to be *Dramatical*, as those, who hold it to be *Historical*, have fallen into this *Paralogism*, that, if *Dramatical*, then the *Person*, and *History* of *Job*, is *fictitious*: Which nothing, but their Inattention to the Nature of a *Dramatic Work*, and to the Practice of *Dramatic Writers*, cou'd have occasion'd. *Warburton's Divine Legation*, Vol. III. Lib. vi.

(k) *Spanheim's History of Job*, c. 5.

* At the End of the *Greek*, the *Arabick*, and *Vulgate Versions* of *Job*, we have this Account of his *Genealogy*, which is said to have been taken from the antient *Syriack*. *Job dwelt in Aushitis, upon the Confines of Idumæa, and Arabia. His Name at first was Jobab. He marry'd an Arabian Woman, by whom he had a Son, call'd Ennon. For his Part, he was the Son of Zerah, of the Posterity of Esau, and a Native of Bozrah; so that he was the fifth from Abraham. He reign'd in Edom, and the Kings before him reign'd in this Order:————— Balak, the Son of Beor, in the City of Dinhabah; and, after him, Job, otherwise call'd Jobab. Job was succeeded by Husam, Prince of Teman; after him reign'd Hadad, the Son of Bedad, who defeated the Medianites in the Fields of Moab. Job's Friends, who came to visit him, were Eliphaz, of the Posterity of Esau, King of Teman; Bildad, King of the Shuhites; and Zophar, King of the Naamathites. According to this Account, Job must be*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

rah: For, by *Keturah* the Patriarch had feveral Sons, whom he, being refolv'd to referve the chief Patrimony entire for *Isaac*, portion'd out (as we call it) and fent them into the *East* to feek their Fortunes, fo that moft of them fettled in *Arabia*; and for this Reason perhaps it is, that the Author of his History records of *Job*, that before his Calamities came upon him, (1) *He was the greateft of all the Men of the East.*

THE Character, which God himfelf gives of *Abraham* is this—— (m) *I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Houfhold after him, and that they fhall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Juftice and Judgment*; which may well afford another Argument for *Job's* being defcended from the Houfe of *Abraham*, fince we find difperfed, every where in his Speeches, (n) fuch noble Sentiments of Creation and Providence, of the Nature of Angels, and the Fall of Man, of Punifhments for Sin, and Juftification by Grace, of a Redemption, Refurrection, and final Judgment; Notions which he could never have ftruck out from the *Light of Nature*, but muft have had them originally from the Inftitution of his Parents, as they fucceffively deriv'd them from the firft *Father of the Faithful*, who had them immediately from God. But (what is an undoubted Matter of Fact) by his Wife *Keturah* (o) *Abraham* had a Son, whose Name was *Shuah*, and therefore when we read of (p) *Bildad the Shubite*, we may well fuppofe, that he was a Defcendant from that Family; who, living in the Neighbourhood perhaps, might think himfelf oblig'd, by the Ties of *Confanguinity*, to go, and vifit his Kinsman, in fuch fad Circumftances of Diftreff.

His Country. In what Part of the World the Land of *Uz* lay, various Opinions have been started, according to the feveral Families, from whence *Job* is made to defcend: But, upon Suppofition, that he fprung from one of *Keturah's* Sons, his Habitation is moft properly plac'd in that Part of *Arabia Deferta*,

be contemporary with *Mofes*, and the three Friends, who came to fee him, muft be *Kings*. But the learned *Spanheim*, who has examin'd this Matter to the Bottom, finds Reason to think, that *Job* was a diftinct Perfon from *Jobab*; was fprung from *Abraham* by his Wife *Keturah*; and liv'd feveral Years before the Time of *Mofes*. *Calmet's* Dictionary, on the Word *Job*, and *Spanheim's* Life of him.

(1) *Job* i. 3.

(m) *Gen.* xviii. 19.

(n) *Spanheim's* History of *Job*. c. 10.

(o) *Gen.* xxv. 2.

(p) *Job* ii. 11.

serta, which has, to the *North*, *Mesopotamia*, and the River *Euphrates*; to the *West*, *Syria*, *Palestine*, and *Idumæa*; and, to the *South*, the Mountains of the *Happy Arabia*. And this Description receives some farther Confirmation from the Mention, which the History makes of the *Chaldeans*, and *Sabæans* plundering his Estate, who were certainly Inhabitants in these Parts.

IN what Age of the World this great Exemplar of Suffering liv'd, the Difference of Opinions is not small, even tho' there be some *Criteria*s to direct our Judgment in this Matter. (q) That *Jacob* liv'd in the World much earlier, than has been imagin'd, is, in some Measure, evident from his mentioning, with Abhorrence, that antient Kind of *Idolatry*, the Adoration of the Sun and Moon, and yet passing by in Silence the *Egyptian* Bondage, which, upon one Occasion or other, could have hardly escap'd the Notice, either of him, or his Friends, had it not been subsequent to their Times. That he liv'd in the Days of the *Patriarchs* therefore is very probable, from the long Duration of his Life, which, continuing an hundred and forty Years after his Restoration, could hardly be less in all than two hundred; a longer Period than either *Abraham* or *Isaac* reach'd. That he liv'd before the *Law* may be gather'd from his making not so much as one Allusion to it, through the whole Course of his Life, and from his offering (even with God's Order and Acceptance) such Sacrifices in his own Country, as were not allowable, after the Promulgation of the *Law*, to be offer'd in any other Place, but that, (r) which the Lord had chose in one of the Tribes of Israel; and that he liv'd after *Jacob* may be inferr'd from the Character given him by God, viz. that for *Uprightness*, and the Fear of God, there was none like unto him upon the Earth, which large Commendation could not be allow'd to any, whilst *Jacob*, God's favourite Servant, was alive; nor can we suppose it proper to be given to any, even while *Joseph* liv'd, who, in moral Virtues, and other Excellencies, made as bright a Figure, as any in his Time. Thus may the Computation be reduc'd to a very narrow Compass; and tho' it be extremely difficult to point out the precise Time, yet the general Opinion is, that he liv'd in the Time of the Children of Israel's Bondage, and therefore his Birth is plac'd in the very same Year, wherein *Jacob* went down into *Egypt*, and the Beginning of his Trial in the Year, when *Joseph* died; (s) tho' it

(q) *Spanheim*, c. 3.(r) *Deut.* xii. 13, 14.(s) *Howell's History of the Bible.*

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

it might probably be less liable to Exception, if his Birth were set a little lower, much about the Time of *Jacob's* Death; and then *Joseph*, who surviv'd his Father about four and fifty Years, will be dead about sixteen Years, at which Time *Job* might justly deserve the extraordinary Character, which God gave him, and have no Man then alive, in Virtue and Integrity, able to compare with him.

His former
Greatness,
and subsequent
Sufferings.

How considerable a Figure *Job* made in the World, both in *temporal* and *spiritual* Blessings, the Vastness of his Stock (which was the Wealth of that Age) consisting of seven thousand Sheep, three thousand Camels, five hundred Yokes of Oxen, and five hundred She-Asles; the Largeness of his Family, consisting of seven Sons, and three Daughters; and the Excellency of the Character, which God was pleas'd to give him, together with the Greatness of his Sentiments, and the Firmness and Constancy of his Mind in all he suffer'd are a sufficient Demonstration: And yet we see, that, as soon as God submitted him to the Assaults of his *spiritual* Enemy, what a sad *Catastrophe* did befall him. The *Sabæans* ran away with his Asles; the *Chaldæans* plunder'd him of his Camels; a Fire from Heaven consum'd his Sheep and Servants; a Wind overwhelm'd all his Children; and, while the Sense of these Losses lay heavy upon his Spirits, his Body was smitten with a sore Disease, in so much that he, who, but a few Hours before, was the greatest Man in the Country, in whose Presence the young Men were afraid to appear, and before whom the Angel stood up, to whom Princes paid the most awful Reverence, and whom Nobles, in humble Silence, admir'd; divested of all Honour, sits mourning on a Bed of Ashes, and, instead of royal Apparel, has (†) his Flesh cloathed (as himself expresses it) with Worms and Clods of Earth, and is all over-spread with Sores and Ulcers.

What his
Distemper
was.

ACCORDING to the Symptoms, which *Job* gives us of himself, his Distemper seems to have been a *Leprosy*, but a *Leprosy* of a more malignant Kind, (as it always is in hot Countries) than our Climate (blessed be God) is acquainted with; and those, who would have it to be a Malady of a more *opprobrious* Name, lose all the Sting of the *Sarcasm*, when they are told, that this Distemper, be it what it will, was not of *Job's* Contraction, but of *Satan's* Infliction, not the Effect or Consequence of his Vice, but the Means appointed for the Trial of his Virtue.

THEIR

(†) Job vii. 5.

THEIR Opinion however seems to be well founded, who make this Distemper of *Job* not one simple Malady, but a Complication of many. For since the great Enemy of Mankind, saving his Life, had a full Licence to try his Patience to the uttermost, it is not to be question'd but that he play'd all his Batteries upon him: And, accordingly, we may observe, that, (u) besides the *Blanes* pustulated to afflict his Body, the Devil not only instigated his Wife † to grieve his Mind, but disturb'd his Imagination likewise to terrify his Conscience. For, when the holy Man complains, (x) *Thou scarest me with Dreams, and terrifiest me with Visions*, the Analogy of the History will not suffer us to interpret, that God himself did inject these affrightening Dreams, but that the Devil (to whose Temptations he had submitted him) did raise gloomy Thoughts, and frame horrid and ghastly Objects in his Imagination, thereby to urge him to Melancholy and Despair.

How long this Load of various Calamity lay upon him, is no where mention'd in Scripture; and therefore since it is submitted to Conjecture, they, who, (to magnify the Sufferings) prolong the Duration of them to a Year, and (as some do) to *seven*, (y) seem to be regardless of the *tender Mercies* of the Lord; especially when there are some Circumstances in the Story, which certainly do countenance a much shorter Time. The News of the Misfortunes, which attended his *Goods* and *Family*, came close upon the Heels of one another, and we cannot suppose a long Space before he was afflicted in his Body. † His three Friends seem to have

(u) *Young's Sermons*, Vol. II.

† Some of the *Jewish* Doctors imagine, that *Dinah*, the Daughter of *Leah*, was this Wife of *Job's*, but this seems to be a mere Fiction. The *Moroseness*, and *Impiety* of the Woman, as well as the Place of her Habitation, do no Ways suit with *Jacob's* Daughter: And therefore the more probable Opinion is, that his Wife was an *Arabian* by Birth, and that, tho' the Words, which we render *curse* God and *die*, may equally bear a quite contrary Signification, yet are they not here to be taken in the most favourable Sense, because they drew from her meek and patient Husband so severe an Imprecation, *Thou speakest as one of the foolish Women speaketh. What? shall we receive Good at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive Evil?* Job ii. 10. *Spanheim's History of Job*, c. 6. (x) Job vii. 14.

(y) *Bdford's Scripture Chronology*, l. 3. c. 4.

† *Eliphaz*, the *Temanite*, was the Grandson of *Esau*, and Son of *Teman*, who dwelt in a City of the same Name in *Idumea*,
not

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.



have been his near Neighbours; and they came to visit him, as soon as they heard of the ill *News*, which usually flies apace. When they saw his Misery, seven Days they sat with him in Silence: After this, they enter'd into a Discourse with him, and at the End of this Discourse (which could not well last above another Week) God heal'd his Sores, before his Friends (who, being Men of Eminence in their Country, may be suppos'd to have Business at home, as soon as this melancholy Occasion was over) were parted from him. Now since all this may be included in the Space of a Month, and a Month may be thought Time enough for God to have made Trial of his faithful Servant; when once such Trial was made, we have Reason to believe, that he would withdraw his heavy Hand, because his Character in Scripture is, that (z) *he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men.*

Of the Contents of the Book of Job.

THE unaccountable Greatness of *Job's* Calamities had led his Friends into a Misconception of him, and made them surmise, that it must be the vindictive Hand of God, either for some deep *Hypocrisy*, or some secret *Enormity*, that fell so heavy upon him: And therefore *Eliphaz*, in three Orations, *Bildad*, in as many, and *Zophar*, in two, argue, from common Topicks, that such Afflictions, as his, could come from no Hand, but God's, and that it was inconsistent with his infinite Justice, to afflict without a Cause, or punish without Guilt; and thereupon charging *Job* with being either a grievous Sinner, or a great Hypocrite, they endeavour, by all Means, to extort a Confession from him. But *Job*, conscious of his Sincerity to God, and Innocence to Man, confidently maintains his Integrity; and, in Speeches return'd to every one of theirs, refutes their wicked Suggestions, and reproves their Injustice and Want of Charity; but always observes a submissive Stile and Reverence, when he comes to speak of God, of whose secret End, in permitting

not far from the Confines of *Arabia Deserta*. *Bildad*, the *Shubite*, was descended from *Shuah*, the Son of *Abraham* and *Keturah*. 'Tis almost impossible to find out who *Zophar* the *Naamathite* was, tho' some will have him descended from *Esau*; but as for as *Elibu*, who comes in afterwards, he was the Grandson of *Buz*, the Son of *Nabor*; liv'd in the Southern Parts of *Mesopotamia*; and, upon the Supposition of *Job's* being sprung from *Abraham*, was his distant Relation. *Spanheim's* Life of *Job*, c. 11.

(z) Lam. iii. 33.

ting this Trial to come upon him, being ignorant, he often begs a Release from Life, lest the Continuance of his Afflictions should drive him into *Impatience*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

DURING these Arguments between *Job* and his Friends, there was present a young Man, nam'd *Elihu*, who, having heard the Debates on both Sides, and disliking both their Censoriousness, and *Job's* Justification of himself, undertakes to convince them both, by Arguments drawn from God's unlimited *Sovereignty*, and unsearchable *Wisdom*, that it was not inconsistent with his Justice, to lay his Afflictions upon the best and most righteous of the Sons of Men; and that therefore, when any such Thing came upon them, their Duty was to bear it without murmuring, and to acknowledge the Divine Goodness in every Dispensation.

WHEN every one had spoken what he thought proper, and there was now a general Silence in the Company, the Lord himself took up the Matter, and, out of a *Whirlwind*, directed his Speech to *Job*; wherein with the highest Amplifications, describing his Omnipotence in the Formation and Disposition of the Works of the *Creation*, he so effectually convinc'd him of his *Inability* to understand the *Ways* and *Designs* of God, that, with the profoundest Humility, he breaks out into this Confession and Acknowledgment: Behold, (a) *I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no farther.* This Acknowledgment pleas'd God so well, that he declar'd himself in Favour of *Job* against his injurious Friends, and hereupon putting an End to his Sufferings, * cur'd him of all his Grievances, and rewarded his Faith and Piety with a Portion of *earthly* Felicity, double to what he had before, and with the Prolongation of his Life, beyond the common Extent of those Times.

THIS is a brief *Analysis* of the Book of *Job*: And, *Its Character*—whoever looks into it with a little more Attention, will soon

(a) *Job* xl. 4, 5.

* The *Eastern* People have a Tradition, that, upon God's proposing to make no farther Trial of *Job*, the Angel *Gabriel* descended from Heaven, took him by the Hand, rais'd him from the Place where he was, struck the Ground with his Foot, and caus'd a Fountain of the purest Water to spring out of it, wherein *Job* having wash'd his Body, and drank a Cup or two of it, found himself perfectly cur'd and restor'd to Health again. *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the Word *Job*.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728. &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

soon perceive, that the Author of it (whoever he was) (*b*) has put in Practice all the Beauties of his Art, to make the four *Persons*, whom he brings upon the *Stage*, keep up each his proper Character, and maintain the Opinions, which they were engag'd to defend; will soon perceive, that, for its Loftiness of *Stile*, and Sublimeness of *Thoughts*, for its Liveliness and Energy of *Expression*, for the Variety of its *Characters*, the Fineness of its *Descriptions*, and the Grandeur of its *Imagery*, there is hardly such another *Composition* to be found in all the Records of *Antiquity*, which has rais'd the Curiosity of all Ages to find out the Person, who might possibly be the *Author* of it.

When and by
whom writ-
ten.

SOME have imagin'd, that, as it has been no uncommon Thing, in all Ages, for Persons of Distinction to write their own *Memoirs*, *Job* himself, or some of his Friends at least, who bore a Part in the *Series* of this History, might set about the inditing it, if not for any other Reason, at last in Compliance to his Request, (*c*) *O, that my Words were now written, that they were printed in a Book!* But tho' some *Family Records* may possibly be kept of Events so remarkable as those, that occur in *Job's* Life, † yet the poetical

(*b*) Universal History, l. 1. c. 7. (*c*) Job xix. 23.

† St. *Jerom*, in his *Preface* to the Book of *Job*, informs us, that the Verse, (in which it is chiefly compos'd) is *heroick*. From the Beginning of the Book, to the third Chapter, he says, it is *Prose*; but from *Job's* Words, *Let the Day perish, wherein I was born, &c.* Chap. iii. 3 unto these Words, *Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes*, Chap. xlii. 6. the Verses are *Hexameter*, consisting of *Dactyls* and *Spondees*, like the Greek Verses of *Homer*, and the Latin of *Virgil*. *Marianus Victorius*, in his Note upon this Passage of St. *Jerom*, says, that he has examin'd the Book of *Job*, and finds St. *Jerom's* Observation to be true. Only we must observe, that the several Sentences, directing us to the several Speakers, (such as these, *Moreover the Lord answer'd Job, and said*, Chap. xl. 1. *Elihu also proceeded, and said*, Chap. xxxvi. 1. *Elihu spake moreover and said*, Chap. xxxv. 1, &c.) are in *Prose*, and not in *Verse*. St. *Jerom* makes this farther Remark, that the Verses in the Book of *Job* do not always consist of *Dactyls* and *Spondees*, but that other Feet do frequently occur instead of them; that we often meet in them a Word of four Syllables, instead of a *Dactyl* and *Spondee*; and that the Measure of the Verses frequently differs in the Number of the Syllables of the several Feet; but allow-
ing

poetical Turn, which is given to the *latter Part* of the Book more especially, seems to favour of a more *modern* Composition, than suits with the *Æra*, wherein we suppose *Job* to have liv'd.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

OTHERS therefore suppose, that the Story of *Job* was at first a plain *Narrative*, written in the *Arabian* Tongue, but that *Solomon*, or some other *poetical Genius* like him, gave it a *dramatick* Cast, and, in order to make the Subject more moving, introduc'd a Set of *Persons* speaking *alternately*, and always in *Character*. But tho' this was certainly the Mode of writing then in Vogue, yet how there came so much of the *Arabian* and *Syrian Dialect* to creep into a Book, that was compos'd at a Time, when the *Hebrew* Tongue was in its very Height of Perfection, we cannot conceive; nor can we be persuaded, but that, in reading the whole, we taste an Antiquity superior to that of *David* or *Solomon's* Time. And yet, this notwithstanding, (*d*) some have endeavour'd to bring down the Author of the Book of *Job* to the Times of the *Babylonish* Captivity, and suppose the Book to have been written for the Consolation of the Captives in Distress. But, if we suppose it written for the Sake of the *Jews*, is it not strange, that, in a Discourse of such a Kind, there shou'd not be one single Word of the Law of *Moses*, nor so much as one distant Allusion to any Rite or Ceremony of it, or to any of the Form of Idolatry, for which the *Jews* suffer'd in the Time of their Captivity? The *Jews*, I say, certainly suffer'd for their Iniquity; but the Example of *Job* is the Example of an innocent Man, suffering for no Demerit of his own. Now apply this to the *Jews* in their Captivity, and the Book contradicts all the Prophets before, and at the Time of their Captivity, and seems to be calculated, as it were, to harden the *Jews* in their Sufferings, and to reproach the Providence of God for bringing them upon them. Without troubling ourselves therefore to examine, whether the Conjectures of these, (*e*) who carry the Date of this Book even lower than the Captivity, and impute it (*f*) to *Ezra*, that *ready Scribe in the Law*

ing two short Syllables to be equal to one long one, the Sums of the Measure of the Verses are always the same. *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 9.

(*d*) Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy, Dissertation II. (*e*) *Warburton's* Divine Legation, Vol. III. lib. vi. & Sentimens de quelques Theol. de Hol. p. 183, &c. (*f*) *Ezra* vii. 6.

A. M.
2276, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1728, &c.
From Gen.
xxxvii. to
the End.

Law of Moses, as he is stil'd, have any good Foundation to support them, we may sit down contented with what is the common, and, as far as I can see, as probable an Opinion as any, *viz.* That (g) *Moses* (as soon as God put it in his Heart to *visit his People*) either while he continu'd in *Egypt*, or while he liv'd in Exile in *Midian*, either translated this Book from *Arabick* (in which some suppose it was originally) or wrote it intirely by a divine Inspiration, for the Support and Consolation of his Country-men, the *Jews*, groaning under the Pressure of the *Egyptian* Bondage; that, by a proper Example, he might represent the Design of Providence in afflicting them, and, at the same Time, give them Assurance of a Release and Restoration in due Time.

A practical
Inference
from Job's
Example.

THIS is what most of the *Jews*, and several *Christian* Writers have affirm'd, and believ'd, concerning the Book of *Job*: But the Author from whom I have compil'd a great Part of this *Dissertation*, has, by several Arguments, hardly surmountable, gone a great Way to destroy the receiv'd Opinion, and left nothing to depend on but this, — That the Writer of this Book was a *Jew*, and assisted therein by the Spirit of God; that it has always been esteem'd of *canonical* Authority; is fraught with excellent Instructions; and, above all, is singularly adapted to administer Comfort in the Day of Adversity. Not to quit therefore this Subject, without an Exhortation to this Purpose, (b) *Ye have heard of the Patience of Job*, says the Apostle, *and have seen the End of the Lord*: And therefore, (i) when we find our Spirits begin to flag under the Sense of any Affliction, or bodily Pain; when our Patience begins to be tir'd with Sufferings, which are greater than we can bear, and our Trust in God to be shaken, because he pours down his Judgments upon us; let us enliven our fainting Courage, by setting before us such noble Patterns as this; and let us be asham'd to sink under our Burthens, in their Weight far disproportionate to those, which a Man, made of the same Flesh and Blood, as we are, and supported by no other Helps, than are afforded us, without murmuring against God, without lessening his Confidence in him, without impeaching his Justice, and without desponding of his Goodness, both patiently endur'd, and triumphantly overcame.

C H A P.

- (g) *Spanheim's* Life of *Job*, c. 13. (b) James v. 11.
(i) Bishop *Smalridge's* Sermon of Trust in God.

CHAP. V.

The Sufferings of the Israelites, and the Means of their Deliverance out of Egypt:

The HISTORY.

NOT long after the Death of *Joseph*, there happen'd ^{A. M. 2433, &c.} a Revolution in *Egypt*, and a new King, who had no ^{Ant. Chris. 1571, &c.} Knowledge of the great Services, which *Joseph* had done ^{From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.} the Crown, perceiving the vast Increase of the *Israelites*, began to fear, that, in case of an Invasion, they possibly might side with the Enemy, and depose him; and therefore he call'd a Council, wherein it was resolv'd, not only to * *A Revolution in Egypt occasions the Oppression of the Israelites.* impose heavy Taxes upon the People, but to confine them likewise to the hard Labour of bearing Burthens, and digging Clay, making Bricks, and † building strong Cities for the

* The original Words, *Sare Massim*, which we translate *Task masters* do properly signify *Tax-gatherers*, and the *Burthens* are afterwards mention'd, as distinct Things, under another Name: So that the Resolution in Council was, both to lay heavy Tributes upon them, to impoverish, and heavy Burthens, to weaken them. *Philo*, in his *Life of Moses* tells us, that they were made to carry Burthens above their Strength, and to work Night and Day; that they were forc'd, at the same Time, to be Workers and Servers both; that they were employ'd in Brick-making, Digging, and Building; and that if any of them dropp'd down dead under their Burthens, they were not suffer'd to be buried. *Josephus* in his *Jewish Antiquities*, [l. 2. c. 9.] tells us, in like Manner, that they were compell'd to learn several laborious Trades, to build Walls round Cities, to dig Trenches and Ditches, to drain Rivers into Channels, and caſt up Dikes and Banks to prevent Inundations. And not only so, but that they were likewise put upon the Ereſtion of fantaſtical *Pyramids*, which were vaſt Piles of Building, rais'd by the Kings of *Egypt*, in Teſtimony of their Splendor and Magnificence, and to be the Repositories of their Bodies, when dead. Thus, by three ſeveral Ways the *Egyptians* endeavour'd to bring the *Israelites* under: By exacting a Tribute of them, to leſſen their Wealth; by laying heavy Burthens upon them, to weaken their Bodies; and by preventing, by this Means, as they imagin'd, their generating and increaſing.

† The two Cities here mention'd, viz. *Pithon* and *Raamses*, are ſaid, in our Tranſlation, to be *Treasure-Cities*, but not Places,

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

the King; thereby to impoverish their Spirits, as well as wear out, and infeeble their Bodies.

THIS Resolution of Council was soon put in Execution, and Task-masters accordingly set over the People, who should keep them to Drudgery, and use them with Cruelty, and do all they could, in short, to make their Lives miserable; but such was the Goodness of God to them, that the more they were oppress'd, the † more they multiplied; in-somuch, that the King, finding that this Expedient would not do, sent for two of the most eminent of their Midwives, whose Names were *Shiphrah* and *Puah*, and gave them strict Charge, that, whenever they were call'd to do their Office to any *Hebrew Woman*, they shou'd privately strangle

where the King repositied his Riches, but rather his Grain or Corn; for such Repositories seem to have been much in use among the *Egyptians*, ever since the Introduction of them by *Joseph*. Considering however the Name and Situation of these two Cities, that *Pithon*, according to Sir *John Marsham*, was the same with *Pelusium*, the most antient fortify'd Place in *Egypt*, call'd by *Ezekiel*, Chap. xxx. 15. *the Strength of Egypt*, and by *Suidas*, long after him, κλεις τῆς Αἰγύπτου, *the Key of Egypt*, as being the Inlet from *Syria*: and that *Raamses*, in all Probability, was a Frontier-town, which lay in the Entrance of *Egypt* from *Arabia*, or some of the neighbouring Countries; it seems hardly consistent with good Policy to have Granaries, or Store-Cities in any other, than the inland Parts of a Country: And therefore, as these were situated in the Out Parts of *Egypt*, 'tis much more likely, that they were fortify'd Places, surrounded with Walls, and Towers, and deep Ditches, which wou'd cost the *Hebrews* an infinite deal of Labour in building, than that they were Repositories, either for Corn, or Treasure. *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. II.

† Commentators observe, that, in this Passage of Scripture, where *Moses* describes the vast Increase of the *Israelites*, he employs a great Variety of Words, in expressing it; and, because the Words, he makes use of, are six in all, some of the *Hebrew* Expositors have thence concluded, that the Women brought forth six Children at a Birth. *Aristotle* indeed, in his *History of Animals*, (l. 7. c. 4.) tells us, that the Country of *Egypt*, where the *Hebrew* Women bred so plentifully, was so strangely prolifick, that some of their Women, at four Times, brought twenty Children: But, without having Recourse to such prodigious

strangle the Child, * if it was a *Male*, and leave only the † *Females* alive. But they, abhorring such a cruel and

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chrift.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

digious Births, as happen'd but feldom, we need but fuppose, that the *Israelites*, both Men and Women, were very fruitful; that they began foon, and continu'd long in begetting; and then there will be no Impossibility for 70 Males, in the Compafs of 215 Years, to have multiply'd to the Number fpecify'd, even at the Rate of one Child every Year. For, according to *Simler's* Computation, 70 Persons, if they beget a Child every Year, will, in 30 Years Time, have above 2000 Children; of which, admit that one third Part only did come to *procreate*, in 30 Years more, they will amount to 9000. The third Part of them will, in 30 Years more, be multiply'd to 45,000; and, according to this Calculation, in 210 Years, the whole Amount will be at leaft 2,760,000. So that, if there was any Thing miraculous, or extraordinary in all this, it was, that they shou'd be able to multiply at that Rate, notwithstanding their hard Labour, and cruel Bondage. *Patrick's Commentary*, and Universal History, l. 1. c. 7.

* *Josephus* tells us, that there was a certain *Scribe* (as they call'd him) a Man of great Credit for his Predictions, who told the King, that there was a *Hebrew* Child to be born about that Time, who wou'd be a Scourge to the *Egyptians*, and advance the Glory of his own Nation, and, if he liv'd to grow up, wou'd be a Man eminent for Virtue and Courage, and make his Name famous to Posterity; and that, by the Counsel and Instigation of this *Scribe* it was, that *Pharaoh* gave the Midwives Orders to put all the *Hebrew* Male Children to Death. *Jewish Antiquities*, l. 2. c. 9.

† For this Distinction in his Barbarity the King might have feveral Reasons. As, 1. To have destroy'd the Females with the Males had been an unnecessary Provocation and Cruelty, because there was no Fear of the *Women's* joining to the King's Enemies, and fighting against him. 2. The Daughters of *Israel* exceeded very much their own Women in Beauty, and all Advantages of Person; and therefore their Project might be, to have them preserv'd for the Gratification of their Lust. *Philo* tells us, that they were preserv'd to be marry'd to the Slaves of the *Egyptian* Lords and Gentry, that the Children descended from them might be Slaves even by Birth. But suppose they were marry'd to Freemen, they cou'd have no Children, but such as wou'd be half *Egyptians*, and in Time be wholly ingrafted into that Nation. But 3. Admitting they marry'd not at all, yet as the Female Sex, among the *Hebrews*, made a very confiderable Figure in *Egypt* for their Sense and Knowledge, the Care of

A. M. 2433, &c.
Ant. Chrif. 1571, &c.
From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.

impious Practice, had no Regard to the King's Command, but fav'd Male and Female alike ; and when the King ſent for them, and reprimanded them for their Diſobedience, they had this Answer in Readineſs ; — † That the *Hebrew Women*, being of a much ſtronger Conſtitution than the *Egyptian*, were generally deliver'd before they came.

THIS was a Piece of Service not unacceptable to God, but to *Pharaoh* it ſeem'd no more than a mere Eviſion ; and therefore, reſolving upon a more effectual Method to extirpate the *Hebrews*, he publiſh'd an *Edict*, wherein he commanded all their *Male Children* to be thrown into the *River* ; and that they might be more ſubject to the Inſpection of his *Searchers*, * he *built them Houſes*, and oblig'd them to live in ſettled Habitations.

SOME their Families, and Application to Buſineſs, and for their Skill and Dexterity in many Accompliſhments, that were much to be valu'd for the Uſe and Ornament of Life, ſuch as the Diſtaff and the Loom, Dying, Painting, Embroidering, &c. ſuch Women as theſe wou'd make excellent Servants and Domeſticks for the *Egyptian Ladies*, who had no Reliſh of ſpending their Time any other Way, than in Idleneſs and Pleaſure. *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

† It is generally ſuppos'd that the Midwives, upon this Occaſion, told a Lye ; but there is no Reaſon for ſuch a Suppoſition, tho' poſſibly they might conceal ſome Part of the Truth, which is not unlawful, but highly commendable, when it is to preſerve the Innocent ; for many of the *Hebrew Women* might be ſuch, as are here deſcrib'd, tho' not every one of them. The Answer of the Midwives therefore is ſo far from being a ſneaking Lye, to ſave their Lives, that it is a bold Confeſſion of their Faith and Piety, to the Hazard of them, *viz.* that they ſaw ſo plain an Evidence of the wonderful Hand of God, in that extraordinary Vigour in the Travail of the Women, that, do what *Pharaoh* wou'd, they durſt not, wou'd not, ſtrive againſt it, becauſe they wou'd *not ſtrive againſt God*. *Lightfoot's Sermon, on 2 Sam. xix. 29.*

* The *making the Midwives Houſes*, is, by moſt Interpreters, aſcrib'd to God, and the Thing is ſuppos'd to have been done in a *metaphorical* Senſe, *i. e.* God gave them a numerous Offspring or Family, and a very laſting Succeſſion or Poſterity. For there are five Things, *ſay they*, which go to compleat the Greatneſs or Eminence of a Family, as ſuch ; its Largeneſs, its Wealth, its Honours, its Power, and its Duration. And therefore, ſince the Midwives hazarded their own Lives to ſave thoſe of the *Hebrew Children*, and to preſerve the *Israelites* a numerous Progeny and Poſterity, the God of *Israel*, in Return, not only made their own Lives long and prosperous, but gave them very nume-

SOME Years before this Edict, *Amram*, who was of the A. M. 2433, &c.
House of *Levi*, had marry'd a Woman, nam'd † *Jochebed*, Ant. Chriſt.
of 1571, &c.
From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.

rous Families, and an enduring Poſterity, in whom they might be ſaid to live after Death, even from Generation to Generation. But all this is a very forc'd Conſtruction, and what the original Words will by no Means bear. We ſhou'd therefore rather think, that theſe Houſes were built not for the *Midwives*, but the *Israelites*, and that it was not *God*, but *Pharaoh*, who built them. The Caſe ſeems to be this : ——— *Pharaoh* had charg'd the Midwives to kill the Male Children, that were born of the *Hebrew Women*; the Midwives fear'd *God*, and omitted to do what the King had commanded them, pretending, in Excuse for their Omiſſion, that the *Hebrew Women* were generally deliver'd before they cou'd get to them. *Pharaoh* hereupon, reſolving to prevent their Increate, gave Charge to his People to have all the Male Children of the *Hebrews* thrown into the River; but his Command cou'd not be ſtriſtly executed, whiſt the *Israelites* liv'd up and down in the Fields in Tents, which was their antient and cuſtomary Way of living; for they wou'd ſhift here and there, and lodge the Women in Child-bed out of the Way, to ſave their Children. *Pharaoh* therefore built them Houſes, and oblig'd them to a more ſettled Habitation; that the People, whom he had ſet over them, might know where to find every Family, and to take an Account of all the Children, that ſhou'd be born. So that this was a very cunning Contrivance of *Pharaoh*, in order to have his Charge more ſtriſtly and effectually executed, than it cou'd otherwiſe have been done; and was a Particular too remarkable not to be inſerted in *Moses's* Account of this Affair. The only ſeeming Difficulty is, to reconcile the Words in the Text to what has been here advanc'd; but this will be none at all, if the Words be rightly tranſlated, and the Verſes rightly diſtinguiſh'd, in this Manner. Exod. i. 20. *And God dealt well with the Midwives, and the People multiplied, and waxed very mighty, and this happened (or was ſo, or came to paſs) becauſe the Midwives feared God.* Ver. 21, 22. *And Pharaoh built them (i. e. the Israelites) Houſes, and charged all his People, ſaying, every Son, that is born, ye ſhall caſt into the River, and every Daughter ye ſhall ſave alive.* *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 7.

† *Jochebed* was not only of the ſame Tribe, but own Aunt likewiſe to *Amram*. For tho' the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, and (after them) many learned Expoſitors, both *Papiſts* and *Proteſtants*, have thought that ſhe was no more than his Uncle *Kobath's* Daughter, and conſequently his *Couſin German*, becauſe the Marriage of an Aunt was afterwards forbidden in the *Levitical Law*; yet the plain Matter of Fact is repugnant to all this. In

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

of the same Tribe, and by her had a Daughter, whose Name was *Miriam*, and, four Years after that, a Son, whom they call'd *Aaron*; and in the Time of this cruel Persecution, his Wife was again deliver'd of a fine, lovely Boy, whom she was very desirous to preserve. For three Months therefore she * kept him conceal'd; but fearing at length a Discovery, she resolv'd to commit him to the Providence of God: And, accordingly having made a little Basket, or Boat of *Rushes*, she plaister'd it within and without with Bitumen or Pitch, to make it keep out the Water. Into *this* she put the poor Infant; and, leaving it among the Flags, by the Bank of the River, she plac'd his Sister, at a proper Distance, to observe the *Event*.

As

Exod. vi. 18. it is said expressly, that *Kobath*, the Father of *Amram*, was the Son of *Levi*. In *Numb. xxvi. 59.* it is said, that *Jochebed* was *Levi's* Daughter, and born in *Egypt*; and here again, in *Exod. vi. 20.* it is said, that *Amram took him Jochebed, his Father's Sister, to Wife*: And therefore, without subverting the natural Sense of these Texts, we cannot but conclude, that the *Nephew* marry'd his *Aunt*. For the Prohibitions, made upon the Degrees of Consanguinity, do not flow from the *Law of Nature*, but only oblige by Virtue of the Command of God; and therefore, before this Command took Place, Relations of a nearer Affinity were allow'd to be join'd together. Nor can the suppos'd Difference of their Age be any Argument to the contrary, since *Levi* might have her, when he was an hundred Years old, and she consequently be very little, if any at all, older than her *Nephew*. *Saurin's Dissertation 43.*

* *Josephus* tells us this Story ——— That *Amram*, finding his Wife with Child, and being solicitous about the King's Edict, pray'd earnestly to God to put an End to that dreadful Persecution; and that God appear'd to him, and told him, that he wou'd in due Time free his People from it, and that the Son, who shortly wou'd be born unto him, shou'd prove the happy Instrument of their glorious Deliverance, and eternize his own Name thereby. ——— That this made him conceal him as long as he cou'd, but fearing a Discovery, he resolv'd to trust him to the Care of Providence, arguing in this Manner: ——— That if the Child cou'd be conceal'd (as it was very difficult to do it, and hazardous to attempt it) they must be in Danger every Moment, but, as to the Power and Veracity of God, he did not doubt of it, but was assur'd, that whatever he had promis'd he wou'd certainly make good; and with this Trust and Persuasion he was resolv'd to expose him. *Jewish Antiquities, l. 2. c. 9.*

As good Luck wou'd have it, *Pharaoh's* Daughter, attended with her Maids of Honour, in a short Time after, came to the River, to bathe herself; and spying the Basket at some Distance, she order'd one of the Company to go, and fetch it out; which when she had uncover'd, the surprizing Beauty of the Infant, weeping, and making its *little Moan*, so mov'd her Heart with Compassion, that she immediately declar'd her Intention to have it brought up, notwithstanding she perceiv'd it was certainly one of those Children, whom her Father, in his *Edict*, had order'd to be drown'd.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

By this Time *Miriam*, the Child's Sister, had convey'd herself into the Company; and, † hearing the Princess enquire for a Nurse, offer'd her Service to go and fetch one out of the Neighbourhood; which when she was order'd to do, she hasten'd to her Mother, who came with all Speed, and took the Child from the *Princess*, who promis'd to see her well paid for her Care in nursing it.

WHEN the Child was of an Age fit to be wean'd, his Mother carry'd him to Court, to shew him to the *Princess*; who * soon grew so fond of him, that she adopted him for her

† The Princess is call'd, by *Josephus*, *Thermuthis*; by *Artaphanes*, as he is cited by *Eusebius*, [Præp. l. 9. c. 4.] *Mercis*; and, in the *Alexandrian Chronicle*, *Myrrina*. But *Josephus* adds farther, that *Thermuthis* having sent for several wet Nurses, one after another, the Child turn'd its Head scornfully from their Breasts, and wou'd not suck: Whereupon *Miriam* told the Princess, that, if the Nurse and the Child were of different Nations, her Milk wou'd never agree with it, but that if an *Hebrew* Woman was fetch'd, he wou'd probably take the Breast from her; and that upon this, she was bid to go for one, and immediately brought her own and the Child's Mother, whom he fell a sucking very greedily, to the Admiration of all the By-standers, lib. ii. cap. 9.

* And well might the *Princess* be fond of the Child, who (according to *Josephus*) had Charms enough to engage any one's Affections. “ For, as he grew up, he shew'd a Pregnancy of
“ Understanding much above those of his Years, and did every
“ Thing with such a Grace, as gave the World to understand,
“ what they might in Time expect from him. After three
“ Years of Age, he was such a Miracle of a Child for Beauty
“ and Comeliness of Stature, that People wou'd stop, and stand
“ gazing on him, with Delight and Admiration, wherever they
“ saw him, and his Carriage and Behaviour was so very obliging,

A. M. her own, and, in Remembrance of his being taken out of the
 2433, &c. River, gave him the † Egyptian Name of Moses. But his
 Ant. Christ Father and Mother, † who brought him up in his Infancy,
 1571, &c. From Exod. had
 i. to Chap. xiii.

“ that he won upon the most morose and unfociable Sort of
 “ Men. *Thermuthis* herself (*continues our Author*) being as
 “ much delighted with him as any, wanting Issue of her own,
 “ and having resolv’d to adopt him for her Son, brought him
 “ one Day to her Father, and, in Merriment, told him, that she
 “ came to present him with a Successor, in Case he wanted one.
 “ The King receiv’d him with an affectionate Tenderness, and,
 “ to gratify his Daughter, took off his Crown, and plac’d it up-
 “ on the Child’s Head; but so far was he from being pleas’d
 “ with it, that he threw it upon the Ground, and trampled upon
 “ it with his Feet. This Action was look’d upon as an ill
 “ Omen to the King and his Government, insomuch that the
 “ Scribe, we mention’d before, being then in the Company,
 “ cry’d out to have the Child kill’d: For, *this is the Child*, says
 “ he to the King, *which I foretold your Majesty wou’d be the*
 “ *Destruction of Egypt, and he hath now confirm’d the Prophecy,*
 “ *by the Affront, he hath put upon your Government, in treading*
 “ *the Crown under his Feet. In short, this is he, by whose*
 “ *Death alone you may promise yourself to be secure. For, take*
 “ *him but out of the Way, the Hebrews shall have nothing more*
 “ *to hope for, and the Egyptians nothing more to fear.* This
 “ Speech gave some Uneasiness to *Thermuthis*, and therefore
 “ she immediately took the Child away, without any Oppositi-
 “ on from the King, whose Heart God had dispos’d not to take
 “ any Notice of what the Scribe had said.” Lib. ii. *ibid.*

† Both *Philo*, *Josephus*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, will have the Word *Moses* to be deriv’d from the Egyptian *Mo*, which, according to them, signifies *Water*, and *Isis*, or *Yses*, which means *preserv’d*, as much as to say, *sav’d from the Waters*, or *preserv’d from drowning*. ’Tis very likely indeed, that the Princess shou’d give the Child a Name from no other Language than her own; but then it is to be consider’d, that the Hebrew Word *Moshab* (from whence the Name naturally flows, and to which the Princess herself owns she alludes) might have the same Signification in her Tongue, that it has in the Hebrew, where it always signifies a *drawing out of the Water*, 2 Sam. xxii. 17. Psal. xviii. 16. and Isa. xliii. 2. It cannot be doubted indeed, but that *Moses* had another Name given him by his own Parents at the Time of his *Circumcision*, but what that Name was, we have no Certainty, nor can we tell, from what Authority it is, that *Clemens* informs us, that it was *Joachim*. *Patrick’s Commentary*.

† Besides the Education which his own Parents gave him, *Philo* acquaints us, that from his Egyptian Masters, he was taught

had taken Care to instruct him in such Things, as related to the Religion and History of his Ancestors; and therefore, when he arriv'd to Maturity, he left the Court, and, coming to live among his Brethren, was himself an *Eye-witness*, at what a merciless Rate the *Egyptian* Task-masters treated them.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

THIS rais'd his Resentment and Indignation to such a Degree, that, seeing, one Day, an *Egyptian* abuse an *Hebrew* in a very gross Manner, he stepp'd in to his Assistance, and, perceiving Nobody near, slew the *Egyptian*, and bury'd his Body in the Sand.

The Occasion
of his leaving
Egypt.

THE next Day, as he walk'd out again, he found two *Hebrews* in Contest with one another; whereupon he admonish'd them to consider that they were Brethren, and wou'd have decided the Quarrel between them: But he, who was the Aggressor, rejected his Arbitration with Contempt, and upbraided him with the Murder of the *Egyptian* the Day before. This gave *Moses* some uneasy Apprehensions, that, as the Thing was now blown, it might not be long, before it reach'd *Pharaoh's* Ear, and endanger his Life; so that he thought it the † best Way to leave *Egypt*,
and

taught *Arithmetick*, *Geometry*, *Physick*, *Musick*, and *Hieroglyphicks*, otherwise call'd *enigmatical* Philosophy; that from the *Chaldeans* he learnt *Astronomy*; from the *Affyrians* their Character, or Manner of Writing; and from the *Grecians* all their liberal Arts and Sciences. But that was not a Time for the *Egyptians*, who excell'd the rest of the World in all Sorts of Learning, to send for Masters from *Greece*, which rather stood in need of *Egyptian* Teachers; for, to be learned in all the Wisdom of the *Egyptians* (as St. *Stephen* asserts of *Moses*, Acts vii. 22.) was to have the best and most liberal Education, that the whole World cou'd at that Time afford.

† *Josephus*, who has given us several Particulars of *Moses's* Life, which, in Modesty perhaps, he might not think proper to record of himself, has assign'd a farther Reason for his leaving *Egypt*, of which it may not be improper, in this Place, to give the Reader this short Abstract. “ When *Moses* was grown to
“ Man's Estate, he had an Opportunity offer'd him of shewing
“ his Courage and Conduct. The *Ethiopians*, who inhabited the
“ upper Land on the South Side of *Egypt*, had made many
“ dreadful Incurfions, plunder'd and ravag'd all the neighbour-
“ ing Parts of the Country, beat the *Egyptian* Army in a set
“ Battle, and were become so elated with their Success,
“ that they began to march towards the Capital of *Egypt*. In
“ this

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

and to secure himself by flying into the Country of *Midian*, beyond the *Red-Sea*.

IN

“ this Distress, the *Egyptians* had recourse to the Oracle, which
 “ answer’d, that they shou’d make choice of an *Hebrew* for their
 “ General. As none was more promising than *Moses*, the King
 “ desir’d his Daughter to consent, that he shou’d go, and head
 “ his Army; but she, after having first expostulated with her
 “ Father, how mean a Thing it was for the *Egyptians* to implore
 “ the Assistance of a Man, whose Death they had been com-
 “ plotting, would not agree to it, until she had obtain’d a solemn
 “ Promise upon Oath, that no Practices or Attempts shou’d be
 “ made upon his Life. When *Moses*, by the Prince’s Persua-
 “ sion, had at last accepted the *Commission*, he made it his first
 “ Care to come up with the Enemy, before they were aware of
 “ him; and, to this Purpose, instead of marching up the *Nile*,
 “ as the Custom was before, he chose to cross the Country, tho’
 “ the Passage was very dangerous, by reason of the poisonous
 “ flying Serpents, which infested those Parts; but for this he
 “ had a new Expedient. The Bird *Ibis*, tho’ very friendly to
 “ every other Creature, is a mortal Enemy to all Serpents; and
 “ therefore having got a sufficient Number of these, he carry’d
 “ them along with him in Cages, and as soon as he came into any
 “ dangerous Places, he let them loose upon the Serpents, and, by
 “ their Means and Protection, proceeding without any Harm
 “ or Molestation, he enter’d the Enemies Country, took sever-
 “ al of their Cities, and oblig’d them at last to retreat into *Sa-
 ba*, the Metropolis of *Ethiopia*. *Moses* sat down before it:
 “ But, as it was situate in an *Island*, with strong Fortifications
 “ about it, in all Probability it wou’d have cost him a longer
 “ Time to carry it, had not *Tharbis*, the King of *Ethiopia*’s
 “ Daughter, who had the Fortune once to see him from the
 “ Walls behaving himself with the utmost Gallantry, fallen in
 “ Love with him. Whereupon she sent privately to let him
 “ know, that the City shou’d be surrender’d to him, upon Con-
 “ dition, that he wou’d marry her immediately after. *Moses*
 “ agreed to the Proposal; and, having taken Possession of the
 “ Place, and of the Princess, return’d with his victorious Army
 “ to *Egypt*. Here, instead of reaping the Fruits of his great
 “ Atchievement, the *Egyptians* accus’d him of Murder to the
 “ King, who, having already taken some *Umbrage* at his Va-
 “ lour, and great Reputation, was resolv’d to rid himself of him:
 “ But *Moses*, having some Suspicion of it, made his Escape,
 “ and, not daring to go by the common Roads, for fear of being
 “ stopp’d by the King’s Guards, was forc’d to pass through a
 “ great Desert to reach the Land of *Midian*.”

IN the Plains of *Midian*, there is a *Well*, common to all the Natives of the Place: Here it was, that *Moses* had stopp'd to refresh himself, when seven of the Daughters of *Jethro*, † the chief Man of the Country, came to draw Water for their Flocks; but when they had fill'd their Troughs,

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1771, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

*His Retreat
to Midian,
and living
with Jethro.*

† The Word *Cohen* signifies indifferently either *Priest* or *Prince*, and accordingly, in these early Ages, both these Offices were frequently united in one and the same Person. It seems however, that *Jethro* was scarce a Prince in that Country, for then, one wou'd think, that the Shepherds wou'd not have dar'd to have been so insolent to his Daughters; and yet, if he was a *Priest*, it is made a Matter of some Contest between two famous *Rabbins* whether he was an *Idolator*, or a Worshipper of the true God. *Aben Ezra* is of Opinion, that as he was descended from *Midian*, the Son of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, in all Probability, he profess'd the true Religion; nor can he suppose that *Moses* wou'd have marry'd his Daughter, had he been bred up in a false one: Whereas *Moses*, 'tis plain, not only owns his Alliance with his Family, but, upon his Arrival in the Camp of *Israel*, invites him to offer Sacrifices to the Lord, (Exod. xviii. 11, 12.) as one, who ador'd the same God with the *Israelites*. *Kimbi* however, on the other Hand, affirms, that, at first, he was an idolatrous Priest, but afterwards, when he came to *Moses* in the Wilderness, and was particularly inform'd of all those great and wonderful Things, which God had wrought, in *Egypt*, for the Deliverance of the *Hebrews*, he became a Convert to the Worship of the true God; and, for this he produces a Passage in the same Chapter, Ver. 11. *Now I know that the Lord is greater than all Gods; for, in the Thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.* But, besides this, there is a farther Difficulty in relation to this *Jethro*. In Exod. iii. 1. he is expressly call'd the *Father-in-Law* of *Moses*, and yet the Father of the young Women, whom *Moses* defended at the Well, and whereof he certainly marry'd one, is said to be *Reuel*, Chap. ii. 18. and not *Jethro*: Either therefore this *Reuel* must be their Grandfather, who, being Head of the Family, might, in a larger Sense, be call'd *Father*, as we find Instances of the like Nature, in Gen. xxxi. 43. 2 Kings xiii. 14, &c. or (as others will have it) this *Reuel*, or *Jethro*, was one and the same Person under different Denominations. Upon Supposition therefore, that he was descended from the Family of *Cush*, it is imagin'd, that, while he continu'd in *Idumæa*, his Name might be *Reuel*, but, upon his Removal into *Midian*, to avoid the Wars and Tumults in his own Country, he came to be call'd *Jethro*, as being the only Remainder (for so the Word signifies) of the *Cushites* in that Country. *Bibliotheca Bibl. and Bedford's Scripture Chronology*, l. 3. c. 4.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Troughs, a Parcel of rude Shepherds, being minded to serve their own Turn first, seiz'd on their Water, and frighten'd the Damsels away: Which *Moses* perceiving, went to their Assistance, and, forcing the Shepherds to retire, drew the young Virgins more Water, and gave it to their Flocks.

HEREUPON taking their Leaves they made haste home; and, while their Father was wondering at their speedy Return, they inform'd him how civil a certain Stranger had been, both in watering their Flocks, and protecting them from the Insults of the *Rusticks*; which made *Jethro* send, and invite him to his House, and treat him in a Manner suitable to the Civility he had shewn to his Daughters; insomuch that *Moses*, after he had tarry'd there some Time, was so pleas'd with his courteous Reception, that he express'd a Willingness to take up his Abode with him, † and become his *Shepherd*. This Proposal *Jethro* very readily embrac'd; and to attach him the more to his Interest, gave him his † Daughter *Zipporah*

† It can hardly be suppos'd, but that a Person of *Moses's* Education, wou'd, in the Space of 40 Years, which he abode in *Midian*, find some other Employment for himself, than keeping Sheep; and therefore some have imagin'd, that, in this Time, he wrote the Book of *Job* (as we mention'd before) to comfort the *Israelites*, by the Example of his admirable Patience, under their heavy Oppression in *Egypt*, and the Book of *Genesis* likewise, that they might the better understand what Promises had been made to their Ancestors, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and that the Time for their Accomplishment was approaching. Nor can we suppose, but that the several Arts and Sciences, which he had been taught in his Youth, he took Care, in this Place of happy Retirement, to cultivate and improve. *Patrick's* Commentary.

† It may be made a standing Observation, that *divine* Authors do not relate all the Passages of a Story, (as other Authors delight to do) but such only, as are most *material*. We may therefore suppose, that a great many Things interven'd between *Moses's* Entrance into *Jethro's* Family, and his Marriage to his Daughter; especially considering, that his Children were so young, at the Time of his Return into *Egypt*. The Observation of *Philo*, however, is not altogether to be neglected, *viz.* *That Men of a great Genius quickly shew themselves, and are not made known by Length of Time*: And therefore he thinks, “ That *Jethro*, being first struck with Admiration of his good-ly Aspect, and then of his wise Discourse, immediately gave him the most beautiful of all his Daughters to be his Wife, “ not staying to enquire of any Body, who he was, because “ his

Zipporah in Marriage, by whom he had two Sons, whereof the elder he named *Gershom*, which signifies a *Stranger*, alluding to his own Condition in that Country; and the younger *Eliezer*, importing *God my Help*, in grateful Acknowledgment of God's having deliver'd him from the Hands of *Pharaoh*, who sought his Life.

WHILE *Moses* liv'd in the Family of *Jethro*, the King, who was upon the *Egyptian* Throne, when he left the Country, died; but his Successor, who was no less a Tyrant, and Oppressor of the *Israelites*, laid such heavy Burthens upon them, as made their Lives extremely miserable, till at length, their Complaints reach'd Heaven; and, as the Time of their Deliverance grew near, God, remembering the Covenant, which he had made with their Forefathers, began to look upon them with an Eye of Pity and Compassion.

MOSES was to be his Instrument in bringing about their Deliverance: And therefore, while he was feeding his Father-in-law's Flock, and, as they wander'd in their feeding, follow'd them as far into the *Desert* as † Mount *Horeb*, he saw a Bush on Fire, and, as he thought, flaming for

“ his own most excellent Qualities sufficiently recommended him
“ to his Affection.” *De Vitâ Moſis*, l. 1.

† *Horeb* is a Mountain in *Arabia Petræa*, at so small a Distance from Mount *Sinai*, that they seem to be no more than two *Tops* belonging to the same Mountain. *Sinai* lies to the *East*, and *Horeb* to the *West*; but we find them frequently in Scripture us'd promiscuously. For, whereas the Author to the *Hebrews* several Times asserts, that God gave his Law to the *Israelites* at *Horeb*, tho' other Places expressly say, that it was at *Sinai*, this is easily agreed, by observing, that they both made but, as it were, one Mountain with two *Tops*, whereof that of *Sinai* is much the higher, tho' that of *Horeb* exceeds it in Fruitfulness and Pleasure. It is not for that Reason however, no nor yet for its vast Height, that it obtain'd the Title of the *Mount of God*. *Josephus* indeed tells us (l. 2. c. 12.) that the People of the Country had a Tradition, that God, in a more particular Manner dwelt there, and that therefore, in Reverence to the Place, they always declin'd feeding their Flocks upon it: But the true Reason of its being so call'd is, that, in After-Ages, it became famous for fundry Events, and, at this Time, receiv'd its Name by Way of *Anticipation*. For here it was, 1. That God appear'd to *Moses* in the Bush; 2. That he manifested his Glory at the Delivery of the Law; 3. That *Moses*, with his Rod, brought Water out of the Rock; 4. That, by lifting up his Hands,

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

for a considerable while, but (what occasion'd his Astonishment) not in the least damag'd or consum'd. This rais'd his Curiosity to go a little nearer, and see, if he cou'd discover the Cause of it; but as he was approaching, † he heard a Voice out of the Bush, calling unto him, and ordering

Hands, he made *Joshua* prevail against the *Amalekites*; 5. That here he fasted twice forty Days and forty Nights; 6. That from hence, he brought the two Tables of the Law; and 7. that here *Elijah* was vouchsaf'd a noble Vision; with some others of the like Nature. *Calmet's Dictionary, Universal History, l. 1. c. 7. and Wells's Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. II.*

† In the Text it is said, that *the Angel of the Lord appear'd unto him in a Flame of Fire out of the midst of the Bush*, Exod. iii. 2. But whether it was a created Angel, speaking in the Person of God, or God himself, or (as the most receiv'd Opinion is) *Christ*, the Son of God, has been Matter of some Controversy among the Learned. Those, who suppose it no more than an Angel, seem to imply, that it would be a Diminution of the Majesty of God to appear upon every Occasion, especially when he has such a Number of *celestial Ministers*, who may do the Business as well. But considering, that God is present every where, the Notification of his Presence, by some outward Sign, in one determinate Place (which is all we mean by his *Appearance*) is, in our Conception, less laborious (if any Thing laborious cou'd be conceiv'd of God) than a Delegation of Angels, upon every turn, from Heaven, and seems, in the main, to illustrate, rather than debase, the Glory of his Nature and Existence. But however this be, 'tis plain, that the Angel, here spoken of, was no created Being, from the whole Context, and especially from his saying, *I am the Lord God, the Jehowah*, &c. since this is not the Language of Angels, who are always known to express themselves in such humble Terms, as these, *I am sent from God, I am thy Fellow-Servant*, &c. 'Tis a vain Pretence to say, that an Angel, as God's Ambassador, may speak in God's Name and Person; for what Ambassador of any Prince ever yet said, *I am the King*? Since therefore no Angel, without the Guilt of Blasphemy, cou'd assume these Titles; and since neither God the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, are ever call'd by the Name of an Angel, i. e. a Messenger, or Person sent, whereas God the Son is call'd by the Prophet *Malachi*, Chap. iii. 1. *the Angel of the Covenant*, it hence seems to follow, that this *Angel of the Lord* was God the Son, who might very properly be call'd an Angel, because, in the Fulness of Time, he was sent into the World, in our Flesh, as a Messenger from God, and might therefore make his temporary Apparitions, Pre-

sages,

dering him to * pull off his Shoes, because the *Ground*, A. M. 2433, &c. Ant. Chris. 1571, &c. whereon he stood, *was holy*. *Moses* obey'd; and while the Voice went on to declare itself the God, who had, all along, been kind to his Ancestors, and had now, with Compassion, seen the Afflictions of his Brethren, and was come down to deliver them from their Oppressors, he fell down upon the Ground, and cover'd his Face with his Garment, as being unable to sustain the Refulgency of the *divine Presence*. From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.

MOSES, by this Time, had entirely laid aside all Thoughts of rescuing his Brethren, the *Israelites*, from their Thralldom; nor had he any Opinion of his own Abilities, if he should make the Attempt, to succeed in so difficult an Undertaking: And therefore, when God propos'd the Thing to him, and open'd the whole Manner and Method, in which he wou'd have it executed, he began to excuse himself, by urging his Meanness and Insufficiency to take upon him the Character of a divine *Ambassador*. This Difficulty God endeavour'd to remove, by assuring him, that he wou'd be with him, and assist him in every Step he took; that he wou'd enable him to accomplish the Thing, though never so perplex'd and arduous; and, for a Token of his Veracity herein, that, within a small Compass of Time, he shou'd see that very People, who now were in Slavery, set free, and worshipping him on that very Mountain.

MOSES,

sages, and Forerunners, as it were, of his more solemn *Mission*. *Pool's* Annotations.

* *Justin Martyr* (in his second Apology) is of Opinion that the Custom of *putting off the Shoes*, both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, before they began to officiate in holy Things, took its Rise from this Precept given to *Moses*; but our learned Mr. *Mede* seems to be of a different Opinion, *viz.* that *Moses* did not give the first Occasion to this *Rite*, but that it was deriv'd from the Patriarchs before him, and transmitted to future Ages from that antient general Tradition. It is certain that *Pythagoras*, who took his *Institutes* chiefly from the *Egyptians*, delivers it as a Rule in his *Rubrick*; *Θύειν καὶ ἀνυπόδητον, καὶ πρὸς ἱερὰ προσελθόναι*, i. e. *he, who sacrifices, should put off his Shoes, and so approach to the holy Ordinance*; and therefore God, in compliance to an antient Custom, then in Practice among the *Egyptians*, might speak to *Moses*, who was a Person well acquainted with their Ceremonies, to *decalceate*, as very well knowing, that it wou'd be a Means to create in him a greater Reverence to the divine Presence, and a more awful Attention to what he was going to say. *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries.

A. M.
2435, *Ec.*
Ant. Chrif.
1571, *Ec.*
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

MOSES, ſtill unwilling to undertake the Thing, deſir'd to know what he was to ſay to the People, and by what Name he was to call the Perſon, who ſent him upon this Meſſage: To which Requeſt, God was pleas'd to reply, — That he, who ſent him, was an *eternal, independent, ſelf-exiſtent* Being, † the God of *Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob*, by which Name he glory'd to be call'd; and therefore he requir'd him, firſt to aſſemble the *Elders of Iſrael* together, and acquaint them with his *Deſign*, and then to go directly to the King, and demand of him a Diſmiſſion of the *Iſraelites*, at leaſt for three Days Journey into the *Wilderneſs*, in order to ſacrifice to their God; which, though at the firſt he knew he wou'd be far from granting, yet, in the End, wou'd be glad to conſent to, when he ſhou'd ſee the divine Power exerted upon ſundry Occaſions, and ſo many Miracles wrought before his Eyes as wou'd compel him to let them go.

SUCH a ſolemn Affurance as this, from the Mouth of God himſelf, was enough, one wou'd think, to have gain'd a ready Compliance; but *Moses* ſtill demurs to the Thing, and makes it an Objection, that the People, when he came to them, might poſſibly queſtion his *Credentials*: And therefore to obviate this, God promiſes to enable him to work Miracles for their Conviction. And, for a Specimen of this, when he bad him throw the Rod, that was in his Hand, upon the Ground, it inſtantly became a Serpent terrible to behold, but, when he order'd him to take it up, it reſum'd its former Shape; when he put his Hand into his Boſom, * upon pulling it out, it was all over *leprous*, but, upon putting

† God, no doubt, was the God of *Noah*, and of all the holy Patriarchs, who liv'd before *theſe three* were born; but for a peculiar Reaſon he is call'd their God, becauſe of his Covenant, and the Promise made to each of them, that the *blessed Seed* ſhou'd ſpring from their Loins, in Oppoſition to the Pretenſions of other neighbouring People, who (as the learned Dr. *Alix* obſerves) were their *Rivals* in that Hope. And ſo the Words will denote, as much as if he had ſaid, the God of *Abraham*, and not of *Lot*, as the *Ammonites* and *Moabites* pretended; the God of *Iſaac*, and not of *Iſhmael*, as his Poſterity pretended; and the God of *Jacob*, and not of *Eſau*, as the *Edomites* boaſted. *Patriſick's Commentary.*

* It is no improbable Conjecture, that, as God commanded *Moses* to work all his Wonders before Pharaoh, this Miracle of the *Leproſy* gave occaſion to the fabulous Story, which was in-
vented

putting it in, and pulling it out again, it became as *clean* as before; and, (as if this were not enough) to gain him a further

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

vented in After-Ages, viz. That *Moses was a Leper, and the Israelites a scabby Race, whom the Egyptians were forc'd to drive out of their Country, for fear of the Infection.* This Defamation is first met with in *Manetho's Egyptian History*; from *Manetho* it descended to *Apion*, the Greek Historian; and from him *Justin* and *Tacitus*, two noted Roman Authors, undoubtedly took it. But, as *Manetho* might not, at first, maliciously devise it out of his own Head, so those Writers, from whom he compil'd his History, might derive it from this Passage of *Moses's* appearing with a leprous Hand before *Pharaoh*, which was presently nois'd about the Country, without the other Part of his being immediately cur'd. For (according to the Argument of *Josephus*) "there needs no other Proof of his being no *Leper*,
"than what arises from his own Words, viz. That no Lepers
"shou'd be admitted into any Towns or Villages, but live
"apart, in a distinct Habit, by themselves; that whoever
"touch'd a Leper, or lodg'd under the same Roof with him,
"shou'd be reputed unclean; and that, whoever shou'd come
"to be cur'd of that Disease, shou'd pass through certain Purifications, wash himself with Fountain-Water, shave off all his
"Hair, and offer such and such Sacrifices, before he shou'd be
"receiv'd into the holy City. Now, if *Moses, says he*, had
"been afflicted with this Distemper himself, 'tis incongruous to
"think, that he wou'd ever have been so severe upon others
"for it." The Leprosy indeed was a Distemper, in a Manner, peculiar to the *Egyptians*.

Est Elephas morbus, qui propter flumina Nili

Gignitur Egypto in mediâ, neque præterea usquam.

as both *Lucretius* (l. 6.) and *Plutarch* tell us: And, if it was so in *Moses's* Time, he may be presum'd to have made Laws more strict against it, with an Intention to excite the People's Carefulness to avoid a Distemper, which they had already seen so much of, but had now (together with the other Calamities of their Bondage) happily escap'd. For that the People, at this Time, were in good Health, is evident from the long Journey they undertook, and which, on all Hands is agreed, they did perform: And that they were not expell'd by the *Egyptians*, but went away from them sore against their Will, their Pursuit of them to the *Red Sea*, and losing all their Lives with a Purpose of retaking them (Facts that are attested by several *Heathen* Authors) are an abundant Demonstration. *Joseph. contra Apion. Plutarch's Quæst. Nat. Bibliotheca Bibl. Vol. II. Exercit. 4. and Patrick's Commentary.*

A. M. further Credit among the People, he gave him a *standing*
 2433, &c. Power to convert *Water* into *Blood*, whenever there was
 Ant. Chrif. Occasion.
 1571, &c.

From Exod.
 i. to Chap.
 xiii.

BUT the Promise of all this miraculous Power could not prevail with *Moses* to accept of this *Office*. He alledg'd, in Excuse, his Want of Eloquence, and || the natural Impediment he had in his Speech. But this Defect likewise God promises to supply in an extraordinary Manner, and, as he was the great Author of human Nature, to give him all the Faculties, that were necessary for the Business, he put him upon. So that, driven from all his Subterfuges, *Moses* was at last compell'd to declare downright, that he had no Inclination to the Office, and therefore desir'd of God to let him alone, and find out some other, that was fitter for his Purpose.

So blunt a Refusal was not so pleasing to God, and might have been resenting with Indignation; but, instead of that, he resum'd the Objection, and told *Moses*, that as to his Defect of *Utterance*, this his Brother *Aaron* (who wou'd be fond of the Office, and was already set out from home to meet him) wou'd be sufficiently capable of supplying. To him therefore he bid him impart the whole Affair, and to make use of him as his *Orator*, but to reserve the chief Conduct of it to himself, and not to forget † to take along with

|| *Moses* here tells us of himself, that he was *slow of Speech*, which most interpret to be a *Stammerer*, or *Stutterer*; and yet *St. Stephen* (Acts vii. 22.) declares of him, that *he was mighty in Words, as well as Deeds*; but this admits of an easy Reconciliation, if we do but suppose, that the Sense of what he spake was great and weighty, though his Pronunciation was not answerable to it. As God however tells him, Exod. iv. 11. that he it was, who *made the Mouth*, and cou'd, consequently, give to any Man what Faculties he thought convenient, or remove any Impediment he might have, it seems not improbable, that, either by Use and Exercise, or else by God's immediate Cure of his Defect, *Moses* had acquir'd a better Facility in delivering his Mind, since we find him making several Speeches to the People, especially that excellent Discourse before his Death, in the Beginning of *Deuteronomy*; as he has likewise (where his Song occurs towards the latter End) given an ample Demonstration, that he wanted not *eloquent Words*, when he pleas'd to employ them. *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Wonderful are the Stories, which the *Hebrew* Doctors tell us of this *Rod*, viz. That it originally grew in Paradise, was brought

with him his Rod, wherewith he wou'd enable him to work all Miracles.

By these Persuasions, and Demonstrations of a miraculous Power to assist him, *Moses*, at last, was prevail'd on to accept the Commission, and, accordingly, went to his Father-in-law, and, † without telling him the Occasion, requested

Leave *Moses re-*

turning to
Egypt, is
met by his
Brother
Aaron.

brought away by *Adam*, from him pass'd to *Noah*, and so, through a Succession of Patriarchs, till it came to be transplanted into *Jethro's* Garden, and there took Root again, God knows how; that it was call'd *Zaphir*, (whence *Ziphorah* his Daughter had her Name) and had the *Tetrogrammaton* written upon it; that, when *Ziphorah* fell in Love with *Moses*, her Father consented that she shou'd have him, if he cou'd pluck up this *Zaphir-Rod*, and, at the same Time, publish'd a Proclamation, that whoever did it first, shou'd marry his Daughter; that hereupon several lusty young Men came, and tried their Strength in vain, but that *Moses*, by being acquainted with the true Pronunciation of the Name of God, in Virtue thereof, did it with Ease, and so not only obtain'd his Daughter, but this Rod into the Bargain, with which he wrought, afterwards, all his Wonders in *Egypt*. But how fictitious soever all this may be, 'tis certain, that in *Exod. iv. 20.* this Staff is call'd the *Rod of God*, and that partly, because it was appropriated to God's special Service, to be the Instrument of all his glorious Works; and, partly to shew, that whatever was done by that Rod, was not done by any Virtue in it, or in the Hand of *Moses*, but merely by the Power of God, who was pleas'd, for the greater Confusion of his Enemies, to use so mean an Instrument. Nor is it an improbable Conjecture, that the *Wands*, which great Ministers are wont to carry in their Hands, in Token of their Power and Office, were originally deriv'd from this of *Moses*. Universal History, l. 1. c. 7. and *Pool's* Annotations.

† He was, both in Justice, and Decency, oblig'd to acquaint his *Father-in-law* with his Intention to leave *Midian*, and go into *Egypt*, because he had bound himself by an Oath to live with him, and was resolv'd now to take his Wife and Children, as being well assur'd of a speedy Return. But he thought fit to conceal from him the Errand, upon which God sent him, lest he shou'd endeavour to hinder, or discourage him from so difficult and dangerous an Enterprize. So that *Moses*, in this Instance, has given us a rare Example of *Piety* and *Prudence*, in that he took care to avoid all Occasions and Temptations to Disobedience to the divine Commands; as well as of a *singular Modesty* and *Humility*, in that such glorious and familiar converse with God, and the high Commission, with which he had honour'd him, made him neither forget the Civility and

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Leave to go, and visit his Brethren, who were in *Egypt*. His Father-in-law readily consented to it; so that taking his Wife and Children along with him, he was proceeding in his Journey, when (to his great Surprise) an Angel appear'd to him in the *Inn* where he lodg'd, and, with a stern Countenance, and flaming Sword in his Hand, threaten'd to kill him, because, by the Persuasions of his Wife, or his own Indulgence, he had neglected to circumcise his younger Son; which, when his Wife perceiv'd, she immediately took a Knife, made of a sharp * Flint, and therewith circumcising the Child, pronounc'd over him the usual Form of *Admission* into the Pale of the *Church*; which when she had done, the angry *Vision* disappear'd, and gave Signs, that God was appear'd.

WHILE *Moses* was on his Way to *Egypt*, *Aaron*, by a divine Revelation, was inform'd thereof, and order'd to go, and meet him in the Wilderness. Not far from the Mount of *Horeb* they met: And, after mutual Embraces and Endearments, *Moses* began to open unto him the Purport of his *Commission*, the Instructions he had receiv'd from God, and the miraculous Works, he was empower'd to shew: And thus proceeding to *Egypt* the two Brothers call'd an Assembly of the *chief Elders* of the People, wherein *Aaron* declar'd to them the Message, which God had sent by *Moses*, while *Moses* (to confirm the Truth of his divine Mission) wrought the several Miracles, which God had appointed him, before their Eyes; insomuch that they were all fully

Duty, which he ow'd to his Father, nor break out into any publick and vain-glorious *Osentations* of such a Privilege. *Pool's* Annotations.

* Whether it was requir'd, that the Instrument, made use of in the Circumcision of Children, was to be of *Stone* or *Flint*, and whether the *Hebrews* never us'd any other, is a Question very learnedly discuss'd by *Pererius*, in his Disputation on this Place. That the *Heathens* perform'd such Sort of Abscisions with sharp Flints or Stones, is evident from several Authors; and though *Pererius* determines against the constant Use of the *Flint* among the *Hebrews* in Circumcision, and against its being prescrib'd, or injoin'd in the Institution, yet there is great Reason to presume, that this Operation was never done with any other Kind of Instrument, before that of *Joshua's* circumcising the *Israelites* in the Wilderness. *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

fully convinc'd that he was a true Prophet, came from the God of their Fathers, who had, at length, commiserated their Afflictions, and sent now to deliver them from their Bondage : And, with this Persuasion, they kneel'd down upon their Knees, and worshipp'd God.

NOT many Days after, *Moses* and *Aaron* went to Court, and, having obtain'd Admission to the King, requested of him, that he wou'd give the *Israelites* Leave to go three Days Journey into the Wilderness, in order to perform a solemn Service to the Lord their God. But *Pharaoh* was so far from complying with their Request, that, knowing no Being superior to himself, he *prophanely* question'd the Existence of their God ; or, if there was such a Thing, he cou'd not see why they might not serve him in *Egypt*, as well as elsewhere, and therefore he positively refus'd to let them go.

The Truth is, he suspected that they had a Design of revolting from his Service, and had been laying *Schemes* to get out of his Dominions. This to him was an Argument, that they had too much Leisure ; and, an effectual Way to check their indulging themselves in such Contrivances, was to take care to leave them fewer vacant Hours ; and therefore he order'd greater Tasks, and more Work to be laid upon them. † He reprimanded *Moses* and *Aaron* for going among the People, and interrupting them in their Employments. He gave their Task-masters charge, not to allow

T 3

them

† The Words of *Pharaoh* are, *Why do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the People from their Works? Get ye to your Burthens* : Which Words seem to be directed, not so much to the *Elders* of *Israel*, who might possibly go along with them, as to *Moses* and *Aaron* themselves ; and so the Sense of the Reproof will be, “ So far am I from granting the Liberty, which you desire for the People, that, as a just Punishment upon you, for your seditious Attempt, I command you also to go with the rest, to take your Share in their Burthens, and to perform the Task, which shall be required of you.” And that so cruel a *Tyrant* did not proceed farther against them, must be ascrib'd to the mighty Power of God, who governs the Spirits, and restrains the Hands of the greatest Kings, when he pleases. This seems to be a better Account, than what some of the *Jewish* Fictions give us of it, viz. that when *Moses* and *Aaron* came into *Pharaoh's* Presence, they were rais'd to a taller Stature, than they had before ; had a Splendor in their Countenances, like that of the Sun ; and appear'd with such Majesty, as quite struck him with Terror and Astonishment. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Patrick's* Commentary.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

They apply
to the King,
but to no
Effect.

A. M. 2433, &c. Ant. Christ. 1571, &c. From Exod. i. to Chap. xlii.

them any more * Straw, and yet to exact the same Tale of Bricks from them without Abatement.

THIS Charge, the Task-masters, who were *Egyptians*, communicated to their *Under Officers*, who were *Hebrews*: And when the People (being forc'd, for Want of Straw, to wander all the Country over to pick up Stubble) had not Time to make as many Bricks, as were exacted, these *Hebrew Officers* were call'd to an Account, and beaten. They, however, not well knowing from whence this unreasonable Severity proceeded, whether from the Royal Edict, or the Rigour of the Task-masters, address'd the King himself, and laid their Grievances before him in the most humble Manner. But so far were they from receiving any Redress, that the Answer return'd them was, " That the King " wou'd have his Edict executed, be it never so severe ; " and wou'd exact from them their full Number of Bricks, " though he was resolv'd to allow them no Straw."

The Mur-
murs of
the People,
and Moses's
Uneasiness
thereupon.

THIS Answer was enough to run them to the utmost Despair : And therefore, as they return'd from the King, meeting *Moses* and *Aaron*, they discharg'd their Grief and Anger (though very unjustly) upon them ; telling them, " That they had taken care to infuse an Odium into the " King against them, and given him a plausible Handle to " destroy them, which they wish'd in God might fall upon " their own Heads." These bitter Expressions afflicted *Moses* to that Degree, that he expostulated the Matter with God, for suffering *Pharaoh* to be so exasperated against his People, and for having not in the least mitigated their Afflictions, since the Time, that he first went to him.

HIS Concern for the Oppression of his Brethren made him certainly forget the Promise, which God had given him,

* What the Use of Straw was in making Bricks, is variously conjectur'd. Some think it was of no other Use, than to heat the *Kilns*, wherein they were burnt ; others, who will have it that they were never burnt at all, imagine, that it serv'd only to cover them from the too intense Heat of the Sun, and that they might be bak'd gradually ; but, as it is evident that they were burnt in *Kilns*, the most probable Opinion is, that Straw was mix'd with the Clay, to make them more solid : For, according to a Passage in *Lucilius*, mention'd by *Nonius Marcellus*, Straw was antiently employ'd to this Purpose.

Nam laterem qui ducit, habet nil amplius unquam,
Quam commune lutum è paleis, cœnumque aceratum.

Sat. l. ix.

him, and the Perverseness of *Pharaoh*, which he had fore-
told him: But, notwithstanding this, God was pleased to
give him fresh Assurances, that now the Time was come,
wherein he wou'd manifest his Almighty Power, and exert
the full Force of the || Name, which he had taken upon
himself,

T 4

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1071, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

|| The Words of God, upon this Occasion, are, ——— I
*appear'd unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the
Name of EL SHADDAI, the Almighty God; but, by my Name
JEHOVAH was I not known to them*, Exod. vi. 3. But how can
this be, when, long before *Moses's* Time, God is so frequently
call'd by that Name? For, did not the Sons of *Seth* call them-
selves by the Name of *Jehovah*, Gen. iv. 26? Did not *Abraham*
swear, and lift up his Hands to *Jehovah*, Gen. xiv. 22? Did not
he call the Place, where he went to offer *Isaac*, *Jehovah jireh*,
Gen. xxii. 14? Did not the Lord say unto him, *I am the God
Jehovah, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees*, Gen.
xv. 7? And when, in a Vision, *Jacob* saw him stand before
him, did not he say, *I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham, thy
Father, and the God of Isaac*, Gen. xxviii. 13? These Passages
make it impossible for God not to be known to the Patriarchs
under that Name: And therefore several learned Writers upon
this Text have apprehended a Fault in our Translation, and
wou'd have the latter Part of the Verse to be taken *interro-*
gatively, thus, *By my Name Jehovah was I not known unto
them?* If we take the Sentence interrogatively, *say they*, every
one will see, that it plainly intimates, that the Lord *had* re-
veal'd himself unto them by this Name, which is agreeable
to the Scripture Account of the Patriarchs Knowledge and
Worship of him; but to take the Words without the *Inter-*
rogation, and suppose them to intend, that the Lord, who
appear'd to *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, was *not known
to them by his Name Jehovah*, cannot be reconcil'd to
some very express Passages in the Book of *Genesis*; un-
less we can suppose, that, as *Genesis* was not written, when
God reveal'd this his Name to *Moses*, *Moses* makes use of it
by way of *Anticipation*, because, at the Time when he wrote,
the *Jews* commonly us'd it, tho' in the Days when the Pa-
triarchs, whose Lives he was giving some Account of, liv'd,
it was a Thing utterly unknown. There is another Way,
however, of expounding these Words, if, by the Name *Je-*
hovah, we understand not the Letters or Syllables, but what
is properly the Import of it, *viz.* not only God's eternal
Existence, but his omnipotent Power likewise, and unchange-
able Truth, which *give Being* (as we may say) to his Pro-
mises by the actual Performance of them. That this is the
Sense of the Word *Jehovah*, is apparent from several Pas-
sages

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

himself, in the Deliverance of his People from their Bondage, and in the Performance of the Promises made to their Forefathers, by giving them the Land, the rich and plentiful Land of *Canaan*, in Possession. With this God appointed *Moses* to acquaint the Children of *Israel*, and to promise them moreover, that he wou'd make them his peculiar People, and take them under his immediate Protection; so that, in the Event, they shou'd plainly see, that their Deliverance, and Admission to the Inheritance, he had spoken of, was effected by that God, who is always faithful to his Promises. But, tho' *Moses* fail'd not to carry these Tidings to the People, yet such was their Affliction of Mind, upon the Increase of their Servitude, that they gave little or no Attention to him.

He is order'd again to apply to the King, and the Result of it. GOD however, pursuing the Ends of his Providence, commanded *Moses* to go again to the King, and demand the Release of his People; and, when he endeavour'd to decline the Office, upon Pretence of the † Impediment in his

sages in this very Book of *Exodus*. Thus, Chap. vii. 5. *And the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah; for behold, I will strike with the Rod, that is in thine Hand, upon the Rivers, and they shall be turn'd into Blood:* So that the Meaning of the whole Passage will fairly be, ——— “ That, tho' God gave *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, such Demonstrations of his Power, as cou'd not but convince them, that he wou'd certainly perform his Promises; yet they did not live to see the Accomplishment of them, which he was now going to set before the *Israelites*. They believ'd in these Things, but they did not *experimentally* know them. They had Dreams and Visions indeed, but *Moses* was the first that wrought Miracles and Prodigies. By these he made the Name of the Lord *known* unto the World:” And therefore *Maimonides* well concludes from this Place, that the Prophetick Spirit of *Moses* was more excellent, than that which had been upon any before his Time. *Pool's* Annotations, *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentaries, and *More Newoch*. Part ii. Cap. 35.

† The Phrase in the Text is, *uncircumcis'd in Lips*; for as, among the *Jews*, *Circumcision* of any Part denoted its *Perfection*, so *Uncircumcision* was set to signify its *Defectiveness*, or Ineptitude to the Purposes, for which it was design'd. Thus the Prophet says of the *Jews*, that *their Ear was uncircumcis'd*, and adds the Explanation of it, because *they cannot hear*, Jer. vi. 10. Again he tells us, that *the House of Israel were*

his Speech, which he might possibly think was the Reason why his own Countrymen did not hearken unto him; and how then cou'd he expect that *Pharaoh* shou'd do it, in a Matter so much to his Loss? God, to remove this Objection, told him, — † That there was no Occasion for

A. M. 2433, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1:71, &c.
From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.

were uncircumcis'd in the Heart, i. e. wou'd not understand, and learn their Duty, *Jer.* ix. 26. And, in like Manner, here *uncircumcis'd Lips* must mean a Person that was a bad Speaker, and wanted Eloquence; and what might possibly induce *Moses* to make use of this *Metaphor*, rather than any other, might be the Consideration of his having so lately neglected to circumcise his Son. Some are of Opinion, that the Word *Circumcision* carries in it an Idea of something *superfluous* in the Part, and that therefore *Moses's* Tongue might be either too long, or too big for his Mouth, and that this might occasion either an *Inelegance*, or Hesitation in his Speech: But the more probable Opinion is, that he was what we call *Tongue-tied*, which his Parents, either in their Fright might not perceive, or, in the general Hurry and Destruction of the Children, might not dare to send for a proper Person to remedy, until it was too late. However this be, 'tis certain, that as *Circumcision* was the first and greatest *Sacrament* among the *Jews*, so *Uncircumcision* was esteem'd by them the greatest Scandal and Disgrace; and therefore *Moses* perhaps thought it some Disparagement to 'him, that he was not able himself to deliver his Mind, in an handsome Manner, to *Pharaoh*, and therefore made mention of this again, to engage the divine Majesty to *circumcise his Lips* (as they term it) to remove this Impediment in his Speech, as we have some Reason to believe that he did. *Pererius*, *Patrick's*, and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries.

† God, to silence the Objection, which *Moses* had more than once made, of his Defectiveness in Speech, tells him, *I have made thee a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron shall be thy Prophet*, *Exod.* vii. 1. by which he does not only mean, that he had invested him with an Authority to require of *Pharaoh* an Obedience to his Commands, and, upon his Refusal, to inflict such Punishments on him, as none but God cou'd inflict; but that, in executing the Commission, he was putting him upon; there was no Occasion for him to speak to *Pharaoh* himself. That he had appointed *Aaron* to do; and therefore he might keep himself upon the Reserve, and *Pharaoh* at an awful Distance, just as God delivers his Oracles to the People by the Mediation of his Prophets. Only there is one Objection against the Passage itself, which some imagine cannot be *genuine*, because *Moses* makes use of the Word *Nabi*,
for

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt
1571. &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

for himſelf to ſpeak unto *Pharaoh*, ſeeing he had conſtituted *Aaron* to be his *Interpreter*; that he muſt not be discourag'd at ſome few Repulſes; that *Pharaoh*, he knew, was a Man of ſo obſtinate a Temper, that the more he was puniſh'd, the leſs he wou'd relent, but that the leſs he relented, the more wou'd his wonders be ſhewn on him and his People; that to this Purpoſe, he had inveſted him with the Power of working Miracles, which would make him juſtly terrible; and that therefore, when they came into *Pharaoh's* Preſence, and he demanded a Proof of the Truth of his Miſſion, he ſhou'd direct *Aaron* to caſt his Rod upon the Ground, and it ſhou'd immediately become a Serpent.

The Mi-
racles,
which the
Magicians
cou'd imi-
tate.

WITH theſe Inſtructions, *Moses* and *Aaron* came again to the King, and repeated the Demand of his diſmiſſing the *Iſraelites*: Whereupon, when the King deſir'd them to ſhew him ſome Miracle, thereby to induce him to believe, that the God, whom they ſpoke ſo much of, had really ſent them, *Aaron* threw down his Rod, which was inſtantly chang'd into a Serpent; but, (to confront this Miracle) the King ſent for the *Magicians* and *Sorcerers* of *Egypt*, and order'd them to try, if, by their *magical Arts*, they could cauſe the like Transmutation. They attempted, and ſucceeded: They chang'd their Rods into Serpents, as the other had done, but with this remarkable Difference, that *Aaron's* Rod ſwallow'd up all the Rods of the *Magician*, which was enough to have convinc'd the proud Monarch of the ſuperior Power of the God of *Iſrael*, had not his Heart been ſo averſe to the Thoughts of parting with the *Hebrews*, that he did not let this Circumſtance make any due Impreſſion upon his Mind.

SOME Time after this, *Moses* and *Aaron* put themſelves in the Way of *Pharaoh*, as he was walking out to the

for a *Prophet*, which, in his Days, muſt have been expreſs'd by another: For ſo, in 1 Sam. ix. 9. it is ſaid, *that he who was now call'd Nabi, a Prophet, was before that Time call'd Roeh, a Seer*; which ſeems to imply, that *Nabi* was not a Word in Uſe till *Samuel's* Days. But this is very far from *Samuel's* Meaning, whoſe plain Senſe is this, — That he, who foretold Things to come, or diſcover'd Secrets, was antiently call'd a *Seer*, not a *Prophet*, for a Prophet heretofore ſignify'd only an Interpreter of the divine Will; but that now (in

the * River Nile, and, urging again the Demand, they had made for the Departure of their Brethren, as a farther Sign that

A. M.
2413, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

(in *Samuel's Days*) they began to apply the Word *Nabi*, or *Prophet*, to those, who cou'd reveal any Secret, or foresee Things to come. *Pool's Annotations*, *Le Clerc's*, and *Patrick's Commentaries*.

* The River Nile has its Fountain-Head in the Upper *Ethiopia*, and proceeds from two Springs, about twenty Paces distant from one another, and each of the Bigness of a Cart-Wheel. About three Days Journey from the Fountain Head, the River grows wide, and deep enough to carry a Vessel; and, having receiv'd another River into its Bosom, it pursues its Course westward for about 25 or 30 Leagues from its Head, and then, winding about to the East, it falls into a great Lake, which is probably that of *Zaire*. At its coming out of this Lake it makes several Windings towards the South, waters the Country of *Alata*, and from thence precipitates itself, between Rocks of 14 Fathom high, with a terrible Noise, and raises such thick Vapours, that, at a Distance, they may be taken for real Clouds. After which, having water'd several Provinces to the East, it continues its Course so far into the Kingdom of *Goiam*, that it comes within a Day's Journey of its first Source, and thence takes a Tour round about, and runs towards *Phezelo* and *Ombareo*. Here it winds about again, and having, from East to North, cross'd several Kingdoms and Provinces, it comes into *Egypt* at the *Cataracts*, which are vast Falls of Water, which, it makes from steep Rocks of no less than an hundred Foot high. From the Top of these Rocks the Water falls with such Violence, that it makes a Kind of Arch, under which one may pass without being wet, and with such an hideous Noise, as may be heard full three Leagues off. At the Bottom of these Rocks, it returns to its usual gentle Pace, with which it flows through the Plains of *Egypt*, in a Channel, about a League broad, tho' modern Travellers say much less. When it comes below *Memphis*, about eighty Miles from *Grand Cairo*, it is divided into two Arms, which make a Kind of Triangle, having the *Mediterranean-Sea* for its Base, and, by Reason of its Figure, is by the *Greeks* call'd *Delta*. These two Arms were formerly divided into five small ones; and from thence came the common Phrase of *Septemplicis ostia Nili*; but they are now so choak'd up with Sand, that they are scarce discernible. This is the only River in *Egypt*, and contains all the Water the Inhabitants have to drink, which made the turning it into Blood an heavy Judgment upon the People. The Overflowing of the River (which most impute to the great

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

that God had really sent them, upon *Aaron's* stretching out his Hand, and touching the Waters of the River with his Rod, all the Waters of the Land of *Egypt* were turn'd into Blood, and continu'd so for seven Days; so that * the Fish died, and the Inhabitants had no water to drink, but were forc'd to dig, in new Places, for some to allay their Thirst. But *Pharaoh*, finding that his *Magicians* did turn Water into Blood likewise, and supposing the Thing, on both Sides, to be equally perform'd by *magical Skill*, was not convinc'd by the Miracle, and so refus'd to let the *Israelites* depart.

WHEN the seven Days were expir'd, *Moses* and *Aaron* came again unto him, requiring the Dismissal of the People, and withal assuring him, that, if he did not grant their Request,

great Rains, which fall, and melt the Snow in the Mountains of *Ethiopia*) is the Cause of all the Plenty and Fruitfulness of the whole Country: and therefore *Plutarch*, and several others tell us, that nothing was had in so much Veneration among the *Egyptians*; that they ador'd and invocated it, as the greatest of Gods, not only under the Name of *Osiris*, but of *Orus* and *Jupiter* likewise, and instituted in its Honour the most solemn of their Feasts; and therefore their Conjecture, who think that *Pharaoh* went to pay his Morning Devotions to the River *Nile*, is much more plausible, than that of the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, viz. that he went to observe *Divination upon the Water*, as a *Magician*, when, in all Probability, his Business was no more, than to bathe himself, as the Custom among the *Egyptians* was to do almost every Day. *Calmet's* Dictionary, *Wells's* and *Moll's* Geographies, and *Bedford's* Scripture Chronology. l. 3. c. 4.

* *Diodorus Siculus*, in his Description of *Egypt*, (l. 1. p. 32.) informs us, that the River *Nile* abounded with all Manner of Fish, though later Travellers tell us, that there are not, at present, many in it; whether this be attributed to the Muddiness of its Water, or to the *Harvock*, which the *Crocodiles*, and other Monsters of this River may be suppos'd to make in it. But, whether *antient* or *modern* Geographers are right in this Particular, 'tis certain that this Putrefaction of the Water, and slaying the Fish, was a very heavy Judgment upon the *Egyptians*, who abstain'd from the eating of most Animals, whose Liquor was generally Water, and whose constant Food was the Fruits of the Earth, and the Fish of this River. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. 2.

Request, they shou'd bring a Plague of † Frogs upon all the Land, and when the King seem'd to set them at Defiance, *Moses* order'd *Aaron* to stretch his Rod again over the Waters; upon doing of which there came up Abundance of Frogs, so as to cover the whole Land of Egypt, and to swarm in their Houses, their Chambers, their Beds, and the very Places, where their Victuals were dress'd: But here it also happen'd, that the *Magicians* likewise perform'd the same, so that *Pharaoh* was not much influenc'd by this Miracle. Only, as his *Magicians* cou'd not remove the Frogs, he was forc'd to apply himself to *Moses* for Relief, who, upon his Address to God, had them all destroy'd the next Day, according to the Time that he had prefix'd; but, when they were gather'd into Heaps, their Number was so great, that, before they cou'd well be dispos'd of, they infected the Air, and made the whole Land stink.

THERE were several other Miracles wrought by *Moses* and *Aaron* in the like Manner. The Swarms of † Lice, which

And those, which they cou'd not,

† The River *Nile* naturally produces Frogs; but so great an Abundance appearing on a sudden, filling the Country, and leaving the Rivers and Fields, to go into the Cities and Houses, was really miraculous. How they got into the Cities and Houses is not so hard a Matter to conceive: For, if expert Generals, according to both *antient* and *modern* History, have sometimes surpriz'd an Enemy, by entering Cities through the *Common-sewers*, with much less Difficulty might the Frogs, these Armies of the divine Vengeance, find a Conveyance into the Cities, which stood all upon the Banks of the River, by Aqueducts and subterraneous Communications; and, being got into the Cities, they might find Apertures in the Walls of the Houses, which the Inhabitants never perceiv'd before. *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum.*

† Some wou'd have the Word *Cinnim*, which we render *Lice*, to signify *Gnats*. The *Septuagint* call them *Κνίπτες*; but what Kind of Creatures these were is not so certainly known. Others wou'd have them to be a new *Species* of Animals, call'd *analogically* by an *old* Name; or, if they were *Lice*, that they were such as had Wings, and cruelly stung and ulcerated the *Egyptians*. But, upon the Supposition, that they were no worse than common *Lice*, this was plague enough to the *Egyptians*, who affected Neatness to such a Degree, that they bath'd themselves every Day, and some of them frequently shav'd their Bodies all over, for fear of such Vermin. Those who pretend that these *Lice* were a new *Species*, make this a Reason, why the *Magicians* cou'd not counterfeit this Miracle, because,

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
3571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

which the *Magicians* cou'd not imitate; the *Murrain*, or Mortality among their Cattle, wherein the *Israelites* were exempted; † the Plague of *Flies*; † the *Boils* inflicted upon the

because, tho' they cou'd easily provide the Serpents, the Blood, and the Frogs, yet this Sort of Animal was now no where to be had; and therefore, as the *Organs* of Sight are more liable to be impos'd upon, than those of *Feeling*, the Magicians might impose upon the King, and the other Spectators, with *fantastical Blood and Frogs*, but *visionary Lice* cou'd not vex and torment the Body: So that now it was Time for the *Enchanters* to desist, and to own their Inability to *mimic Moses* any farther. But supposing, that what the Magicians did, in the three former Miracles, was not Illusion and Imposition upon the Senses, but *Reality*, the true Reason, why they cou'd proceed no farther, was, that God Almighty had laid his Restraint and Prohibition upon the evil Spirits, who had hitherto been subservient to them, that they might not assist them any longer. *Le Clerc's Commentary*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl. in Locum*.

† The Word *Arob*, which we render *Fly* in general, is, by the *Septuagint*, call'd *Κυνόμυια*, i. e. *Dog-fly*, from its biting; for it fastens its Teeth so deep in the Flesh, and sticks so very close, that it oftentimes makes Cattle run mad; and the Congruity of this Plague seems to be greater, because one of the *Egyptian* Deities, which they call'd *Anubis*, bore the Head of a Dog. The Psalmist indeed tells us, that *God sent divers Sorts of Flies among them, which devour'd them*, Psalm lxxviii. 45. So that, according to him, it was not one particular Kind, but *all Sorts* of Flies mingled together in one prodigious Swarm or Conflux. Some translate it a *Mixture of Beasts*, which they suppose went into *Egypt* to infest and destroy the Country: but this is not so probable a Construction, because the Punishments, hitherto inflicted, were nauseous and troublesome, rather than mortal; though this plague of infinite Numbers of small Tormentors is so great a one, that God calls it his Army, *Joel* ii. 25; and that the *Greeks* thought fit (as *Pliny*, l. 10. c. 28. tells us) to have a God to deliver them from it, under the Stile of *Myiagros*, or *Myiodes*, even as *Belzebub* signifies the Lord or God of Flies. *Bochart, Hier. Pt. II.*

† The *Hebrew* Word *Shechin* properly signifies an *Inflammation*, which first makes a Tumour or Boil (as we translate it) and thence turns into a grievous Ulcer. Dr. *Lightfoot* indeed observes, that, in the Book of *Job*, Chap. ii. 7, 8. where the same Word occurs, it signifies only a *burning Itch*, or an *inflam'd Scab*; an intolerable dry Itch, which *Job* cou'd not scratch off with his Nails, and was therefore forc'd to make use

the *Magicians* themselves; the terrible *Thunder* and *Lightning*, † *Rain*, and *Hail*, which destroyed the Fruits of the Earth; the Plague of the † *Locusts*, or *Grashoppers*, which

A. M. 2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt. 1571, &c.
From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.

use of a *Potſherd*: But then he confeſſes that this *Shechin*, here ſpoken of, was more *rancorous* than that, having *Blains* and *Ulcers*, that broke out with it, which *Job's* had not. So that the *Egyptians*, according to this, muſt have been vex'd with a treble Punishment at once (a Punishment fitly calculated for the Mortification of a delicate and voluptuous People) aking *Boils*, nauſeous *Ulcers*, and a burning *Itch*: And to this that Commination of *Moses* to the People, in caſe they prov'd diſobedient, does without all Peradventure, allude, *The Lord will ſmite thee with the Botch of Egypt, and with the Emrods, and with the Scab, and with the Itch, whereof thou canſt not be heal'd.* Deut. xxviii. 27.

† This Infection was the more terrible in *Egypt*, becauſe, according to the Account of *Herodotus*, (l. 3. c. 10.) a very rare Thing it was, to ſee any *Rain*, and much more any *Hail* in that Climate: And, accordingly, he mentions it as a Kind of Prodigy, that in the Reign of *Pſammenitus*, there happen'd to be a Shower, in *Thebes*, which was never known before in the Memory of Man, nor ever after, to the Age wherein our Author wrote. The *Pſalmiſt* has given us a very poetick Deſcription of this Judgment: *He deſtroy'd the Vines with Hail, and the Sycamore-Trees with Froſt: He gave up the Cattle alſo to the Hail, and their Flocks to hot Thunder-Bolts,* Pſal. lxxviii. 47, 48. And from the plain Account of *Moses*, where he mixes *Thunder*, *Hail*, and *Fire together*, Exod. ix. 23. the Obſervation is obvious, that here were no leſs than three of the Elements in Confederacy againſt *Pharaoh's* Obſtinacy; *the Air* in the *Thunder*? *the Water* in the *Hail*; and *the Fire*, in the *Lightning*, all jointly demonſtrating, and proclaiming, that the *God of Iſrael* was the *God of Nature*.

† This is the Creature, which we properly call the *Grashopper*; and wonderful is the Account, which ſeveral Authors give of them. *Thevenot*, in his Travels, tells us, “ That in “ that Part of *Scythia*, which the *Coffacks* now inhabit, there “ are infinite Numbers of them, (eſpecially in dry Seasons) which “ the *North-Eaſt* Wind brings over from *Tartary*, *Circasſia*, “ and *Mingrelia*, which are ſeldom or never free from them; “ that they fly in the Air all compact together, like a vaſt “ Cloud, ſometimes 15 or 18 Miles long, and about 10 or “ 12 Miles broad, ſo that they quite darken the Sky, and “ make the brighteſt Day obſcure; and that wherever they “ light, they devour all the Corn in leſs than two Hours “ Time,

A. M. 2433, *&c.*
 Ant. Chriſt. 1571, *&c.*
 From Exod.

i. to Chap.
 xiii.

which devour'd what eſcap'd from the *Hail*; and that of thick † *Darkneſs*, which cover'd all *Egypt* for three Days, while

“ Time, and frequently make a Famine in the Country.
 “ Theſe Inſects, *ſays he*, live not above ſix Months; and
 “ when they are dead, the Stench of them ſo corrupts and
 “ infects the Air, that it very often breeds dreadful Peſti-
 “ lences.” God (as we hinted before) calls the *Locuſt*, the
Canker-worm, *Caterpillar*, and the *Palmer-worm*, his great
Army, which he ſends amongſt a wicked and rebellious People,
Joel ii. 25. And how proper the Expreſſion is, in Relation
 to the *Locuſt* in particular, will appear from the Account
 which *Aldrovandus* and *Fincelius* give us of theſe Animals,
viz. “ That, in the Year of our Lord 852, an infinite Num-
 “ ber of them was ſeen to fly over twenty Miles in *Germany*
 “ in one Day, in the Manner of a *form'd Army*, divided in
 “ ſeveral *Squadrons*, and having their *Quarters* apart, when
 “ they reſted; that the *Captains* march'd a Day's Journey be-
 “ fore the reſt, and choſe the moſt opportune Places for their
 “ *Camp*, that they never remov'd 'till Sun-riſing, at which
 “ Time they went away in as much *Order*, as an Army of
 “ Men cou'd do; that, at laſt, having done great Miſchief,
 “ wherever they paſſ'd (after Prayers made to God) they
 “ were driv'n, by a violent Wind, into the *Belgick Ocean*, and
 “ there drown'd; but that, being caſt by the Sea upon the
 “ Shore, they cover'd 140 Acres of Land, and cauſ'd a great
 “ Peſtilence in the Country :” Which is enough to ſhew how
 dreadful a Punishment this was, eſpecially conſidering, that theſe
Locuſts were ſuch, as were never known before, and yet the ordinary
Locuſt (as *Ariſtotle* and *Pliny* have deſcrib'd it) was an Ani-
 mal ſo fierce and formidable, that one ſingle one wou'd kill a
 Serpent, by taking it faſt by the Jaws, and biting it to Death.
Ariſt. Hiſt. Animal. l. 5, c. 23. *Pliny's* Nat. Hiſt. l. 11. c. 9.
 and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† The *Septuagint*, and moſt Tranſlations render it, a *Dark-
 neſs*, which might be felt, i. e. conſiſting of black Vapours
 and Exhalations, ſo condens'd, that they might be perceiv'd
 by the Organs of Touch. But, ſome Commentators think,
 that this is carrying the Senſe too far; ſince, in ſuch a Medium
 as this, Mankind cou'd not live an Hour, much leſs for the
 Space of three Days, as the *Egyptians* are ſaid to have done:
 And therefore they imagine, that, inſtead of a *Darkneſs* that
 may be felt, the Hebrew Phraſe may ſignify a Darkneſs, where-
 in Men were groping and feeling about for every Thing, they
 wanted. And in this Senſe the Author of the Life of *Moses*
 certainly takes it; “ For, in this Darkneſs, *ſays he*, they,
 “ who

while the Land of *Goshen*, (where the *Israelites* liv'd) was enlighten'd as usual. All these Miracles, perform'd by the Word of *Moses*, did not a little perplex the King. He found that all the Power and Learning of the *Magicians* cou'd not equalize them. Upon attempting one of them, they themselves confess'd that it was done by *the Finger of God*; and, in the Case of another, they were equally Sufferers in the common Calamity: So that the King's Heart was, several Times, almost overcome. He offer'd the *Israelites* Leave to perform their religious Offices to their God; provided they wou'd do it in *Egypt*; but their Religion, (as *Moses* told him) was so very different from the *Egyptian*, that were they to do what God requir'd of them in *Egypt*, the Inhabitants wou'd * rise up against

A. M. 2433, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1571, &c.
From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.
Hereupon the King begins to relent.

“ who were in Bed, durst not get up, and such, as their natural Occasions compell'd to get up, went feeling about by the Walls, or any other Thing, they cou'd lay hold on, as if they had been blind.” What it was, that occasion'd this *Darkness*; whether it was in the *Air*, or in their *Eyes*; whether it was a Suspension of *Light* from the Sun in that Country, or a black and thick Vapour, which totally intercepted it; there is Reason to think, that the Description, which the Author of *the Book of Wisdom* gives us of their inward Terrors, and Consternation, is not altogether conjectural, viz. That they were not only Prisoners of *Darkness*, and fetter'd with the Bonds of a long Night, but were horribly astonish'd likewise, and troubled with strange Apparitions: For, while over them was spread an heavy Night, they were to themselves more grievous than *Darkness*, Wisd. xvii. 2, 3, 21. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and *Philo's* Life of *Moses*.

* The Words in the Text are, *Lo, shall we sacrifice the Abominations of the Egyptians before their Eyes, and shall they not stone us?* Exod. viii. 26. Where the Interrogation, having in it the full Force of an Affirmation, makes the Sense of the Words to be this: “ If we shou'd offer those Creatures, which the *Egyptians* worship for Gods, as the Ox, and the Sheep, they doubtless will be affronted to see us sacrifice their Gods to our God.” For, that the *Egyptians* did look upon several Animals with a sacred Veneration, is evident from that known Passage in the *Satyrist*.

lanatis Animalibus abstinet omnis
Mensa: Nefas illic Fœtum jugulare Capellæ.

Juven. Sat. 15.

A. M. against them and stone them. The King, after this, offered that they might go out of the Kingdom, provided 2433, &c. adult Persons only would go, and leave their Children Ant. Chris. behind, as Pledges for their Return; but to this *Moses* 1571, &c. peremptorily replied, that none should be left behind, From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii. the Young and the Old should go together; which enraged *Pharaoh* so, that, with some severe Menaces, he ordered him to depart from his Presence. However, as he found the Plagues increase upon him, he came to a farther Concession, and was willing that the People should go, but only that their Flocks, and their Herds should be stay'd, as rightly supposing, that this might be a Means to accelerate their Return: But *Moses* positively insisted that all their Substance should be taken with them, and *not one Hoof be left behind*; whereupon *Pharaoh* grew so exceedingly angry, that he charg'd him to be gone from his Presence, and never attempt to see him more, for that, if he did, he would certainly put him to death.

Moses's last Message to him. *MOSES* however, by the divine Command, went once more to *Pharaoh*, with the severest Message he had ever brought him, and represented to him, that, at Midnight, God would strike dead the First-born of every Family throughout all the Land of *Egypt*, and that thereupon there should be such a Dread, and Terror among the *Egyptians*, that they would come to him in the most submissive Manner, and beg of him to lead the People out of the Land, and after that, said he, *I shall go*; which put *Pharaoh* into such a Rage, that *Moses*, having no Intention to incense and provoke him farther, turn'd away, and left him.

The Institution of the Passover. FOUR Days before this, God had instructed *Moses* and *Aaron* to direct the People to prepare the *Passover*, which was to be a *Feast* in Commemoration of their Departure out of *Egypt*; because the Night before they left it, the destroying Angel, who slew the First-born of the *Egyptians*, pass'd over the Houses of the *Israelites*, without doing them any Harm, they being mark'd with the Blood of the Lamb, which was kill'd the Evening before. And the Injunction, which *Moses* gave the People, was to this Effect;—That † every Family of *Israel* (or, if the Family was too little,

two

† Some learned Men are of Opinion, that God, in the Institution of the *Passover*, had respect to these impious Rites, which either then did prevail, or, in a short Time, were to prevail among the *Egyptians*, and other Nations, where the *Israelites*

two neighbouring Families joining together) thou'd, on the *Tenth* Day of the Month, take a Lamb or a Kid, and shut it up until the *fourteenth* Day, and then kill it; that the Lamb was to be a *Male*, not above a Year old, and without any Manner of *Blemish*; that, when they kill'd it, they thou'd catch its Blood in a Vessel, and with a Bunch of *Hyssop* dipp'd in it, sprinkle the *Lintel* and *Side-posts* of the

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

U 2

outer

raelites were to dwell. Thus they tell us, "That God appointed a Lamb to be slain, and eaten, and the Month *Nisan* or *March*, to be the particular Time of eating it, in Contempt of the *Egyptians*, who, at that Time, when the Sun first enter'd into *Aries*, began their solemn Worship and Adoration of this Creature, and that celestial Sign; that he forbade the People to eat the Flesh of the *Paschal* Lamb raw, or *sodden*, to break its Bones, or leave any Fragments of it, because, in the profane Feasts of *Bacchus*, it was a Custom to eat the raw Flesh of the Victims, which they offer'd to that God, and to break all their Bones; and, in the Adoration of the *ægypti*, whom the *Egyptians*, and, from them, the *Athenians*, reputed *Goddeſſes*, they boil'd all their Sacrifices, and carry'd constantly some Part of them home, as a good Preservative against Misfortunes." But there is no Need, one wou'd think, for such elaborate Explications, when, considering the Situation the *Israelites* were in, sorely oppress'd by the *Egyptians*, and shortly to be releas'd, and sent away with all Speed, the *Nature* and *Quality* of the *Paschal* Sacrifice, as well as the *Manner* of *dressi*ng, and *Manner* of *eating* it, may perfectly be accounted for. Thus it was to be a *Male*, because a more excellent Species than the Female; *without Blemish*, to render it acceptable to God; *under a Year old*, otherwise it cou'd not properly be called a *Lamb*; and *set apart from the rest of the Flock*, that it might be in Readiness, when the People came in haste to offer it. *Roasted it was to be*, and not *boil'd*, because roasting was the speedier Way of dressing it; but *roasted thoroughly*, because the whole was to be eaten; and *the whole was to be eaten*, that none might be left for the *Egyptians* to profane. It was to be eaten *standing*, and in *haste*, and with other Circumstances of Men every Moment expecting to begin their Journey; *with bitter Herbs*, to put them in Mind of their cruel Servitude; and *unleaven'd Bread*, in Memory of their Deliverance from it, so suddenly, that they had not even Time to leaven their Bread for their Journey; which is all that the *Israelites* understood, and all perhaps that God, at that Time, intended they should understand, by the Directions, which he gave them concerning this remarkable Ordinance. *Spencer de Rit. Heb. Tom. I. l. 2. c. 4.*

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

outer Door, and so not stir out of the House until next Morning; that, in the mean Time, they were to eat the Lamb or Kid, (dress'd whole, and without breaking a Bone of it) neither *raw*, nor *sodden*, but *roasted*, with *unleaven'd* Bread, and bitter Herbs; that if there was more than they cou'd dispense with, no Stranger was to eat of it, and therefore they were to burn it; and, lastly, that the Posture, in which they were to eat it, was to be in a Hurry, with their Cloathes on, and their Staves in their Hands, as if they were just upon the Point of going.

And the Oc-
casion of the
Israelites
leaving E-
gypt in haste.

WHEN every Thing was thus in Readiness for their Departure, God, in the Middle of the Night, by his destroying Angel, † slew the First-born of every House in *Egypt*, from

† The Word *Bekor* signifies sometimes a Person of some *Eminence* or *Excellence*, as well as the *First-born*: And therefore it may not be an unreasonable Supposition, that, where a Family had no *First-born*, the *principal*, or most eminent Person was smitten with Death; Which is certainly better, than to imagine, with some, both *Jewish* and *Christian* Interpreters, that the Words of *Moses* are only applicable to an House that had a *First-born*, or, with *St. Austin*, that Providence did so order it at this Time, that every House had a *First-born*. Since this however is the concluding Judgment, which God sent upon the *Egyptians*, it may not be improper here to enquire a little how long *Moses* was in working all these Miracles. According to Archbishop *Usher* then, (who has included them all within the Space of one Month) we may suppose, that, about the 18th Day of the *sixth* Month, was sent the Plague of the *Waters turn'd into Blood*, which ended *seven* Days after. On the 25th came the *second* Plague of *Frogs*, which was remov'd the Day following, and on the 27th, that of the *Lice*. About the 28th *Moses* threaten'd the *fourth* Plague of *Flies*, and inflicted them on the 29th. On the 1st of the next Month, (which was afterwards made the *first* Month of the Year) he foretold the *fifth* Plague of the *Murrain*, and inflicted it the next; and on the 3d, the *sixth* Plague of *Boils*, which fell upon the Magicians themselves. About the 4th Day, he foretold the *seventh* Plague of *Thunder* and *Hail*, and on the 5th inflicted it. On the 7th, he threaten'd the *eighth* Plague of *Locusts*, and, having sent them the Day following, remov'd them on the *ninth*. On the 10th he instituted the Feast of the *Passover*, and brought upon *Egypt* the *ninth* Plague of *Darkness*, which lasted for *three* Days; and on the 14th, he foretold the *Tenth*, viz. the Destruction of all their *First-born*, which came to pass the Night following. This seems to be a reasonable Period of Time; and the gradual In-crease

from the Prince, who sat upon the Throne, to the meanest Slave ; but, among the *Israelites*, none was hurt, because the bloody Mark, upon the Door-posts, was a Token for the Angel not to strike there. At Midnight there was a sudden Out-cry and Confusion among the *Egyptians* : The dying Groans of their Children awoke them ; and, when they perceiv'd that in every Family, without Exception, the *First-born*, both of Man and Beast, were dead, they came immediately to *Moses* in a great Fright and Terror, and desir'd him to get the People together, and to take their Flocks, and their Herds, and all that belong'd to them, and be gone, because they cou'd not tell, where such dreadful Judgments wou'd end. *Moses* had before-hand, according to God's Order, directed the *Israelites* to borrow of the *Egyptians* Silver and Gold Vessels to a great Value ; and God had, at this Time, disposed the Hearts of the *Egyptians* to lend them every Thing they ask'd for. The Truth is, they were in a Manner frighted out of their Wits, and so urgent were they to have the *Israelites* gone, that they would not let them stay, so much as to bake their Bread, but oblig'd them to take the Dough, raw as it was, along with them, and bake it, as well as they cou'd, upon the Road : From whence it came to be a Law, that, during the whole eight Days of the Passover, no other Bread, than what was unleaven'd, was to be eaten,

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

The OBJECTION.

“ THE Services, which *Joseph* did the Crown of *Egypt*, were so many, and so very remarkable, that

U 3

“ one

crease of these Judgments is somewhat remarkable. The four first Plagues were *loathsome*, rather than *fatal*, to the *Egyptians* ; but after that of the *Flies*, came the *Murrain*, which chiefly spent its Rage upon the Cattle : The *Boils* and *Blanes* reach'd both Man and Beast, though there was still a Reserve for Life. The *Hail* and *Locusts* extended, in a great Measure, even to Life itself ; the first by an *immediate* Stroke, and both *consequently* by destroying the Fruits of the Earth. That of *Darkness* added Consternation to their Minds, and Lashes to their Consciences ; and when all this wou'd not reclaim, at length came the decisive Blow ; first the *Excision* of the *First-born*, and then the *drowning* of the incorrigible Tyrant and all his Host ; great and marvellous are thy Works, O Lord, God Almighty ! just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints ! Rev. xv. 3.

A M. " one can hardly imagine, that a *Nation*, who ow'd their
 2433, &c. " Lives to him, (a) as they themselves confess, or a *King*,
 Ant. Chris. " who was indebted to him for so large an Augmentation
 1571, &c. " of his Revenue, shou'd ever lose the Remembrance of so
 From Exod. " able a *Minister*. But allowing this to be a *Frailty* in
 i. to Chap. " human Nature, that we are unmindful oftentimes of our
 xiii. " best *Benefactors*; yet, what Reason cou'd there be, why
 " the *Egyptians* shou'd, all on a sudden, take it in their
 " Heads to treat the *Israelites* so inhumanly, a Company of
 " poor harmless *Shepherds*, who cou'd give no Molestation
 " to any Government; Or, if it be in the Nature of Man
 " to be *cruel*, why shou'd a God of infinite *Mercy* and
 " *Compassion* suffer *his own* People, for whom he profess'd
 " so particular a Regard, to undergo so long, and so severe
 " a Servitude, when we read of no Sins, and Provocations
 " extraordinary on their Parts to excite him to it?

" To repel Violence, and vindicate the Oppress'd, are
 " certainly Acts of great Generosity; but, even this may
 " not be done, to any high Degree, without a proper Au-
 " thority: And therefore, when we find *Moses* killing an
 " *Egyptian*, because he mal-treated an *Hebrew* Brother,
 " we cannot but think that he transcended his Commission;
 " that he acted the Part of a *Magistrate*, when he was but
 " a *private* Man, and was therefore guilty of wilful *Mur-*
 " *ther*, as himself seems to have been conscious, by bury-
 " ing the dead Body in the Sand.

" By all that appears in *Moses's* Writings, he seems to
 " have had a competent Knowledge in Matters of Religion;
 " and yet it may justly raise our Wonder, how he came,
 " at the Age of Fourscore, to be so ignorant of the
 " very *Name of God*, as to enquire of him by what Title
 " he was to distinguish him, when he carried his Message
 " to the *Israelites*; nor does the Title, or Definition of
 " *I am that I am*, which he makes God give of himself,
 " and seems to carry in it a *Reproof* to *Moses's* Question,
 " convey, in the least, any *positive* or *distinct* Idea of what
 " the Divine Nature is.

" GREAT and hazardous Actions indeed are not to be
 " enterpriz'd without mature Thought and Deliberation;
 " but when *Moses* was assur'd of the Divine Appearance,
 " and that it was God, in Reality, who was then speak-
 " ing to him, it favours of Perverseness and Obstinacy, ra-
 " ther than any Humility or Diffidence of himself, to
 " frame

(a) Gen. xlvii. 25.

“ frame so many idle Excuses, in order to evade a Ser-
 vice, which God was so desirous to employ him in.
 “ THE Sign however, which God gave *Moses* of the
 Certainty of his Success, viz. That on the Mountain,
 where they then were, the *Israelites*, when releas'd,
 should come and *worship him*, was not so very *satisfac-*
tory; because it referr'd him to an *Event* a long while
 posterior to his *Mission*. Nor was his *Mission* itself so
 very *pleasing* to God, one wou'd think, when the very
 next News we have of him, is, that *he meets Moses* in
 the *Inn*, and threatens to *slay him*, which put the whole
 Family into a sad Flutter, and made the *good Woman*, to
 save her Husband's Life, *circumcise* her Son, though
 she scolded all the while, and call'd him a *bloody Hus-*
band.

“ THE Truth is, *Moses*, in this Part of the History,
 has not so well consulted the Honour and Veracity of
 the God, from whom he speaks. When he comes to
Pharaoh, he requests only the Grant of *three Days Jour-*
ney into the Wilderness, in order to offer Sacrifices to
 God; and yet it is apparent, that, from the very first,
 he was meditating a total Escape. When he speaks to
 the People, to give them Consolation under their Af-
 flictions, he promises them a *Land flowing with Milk and*
Honey, which denotes all Manner of plenteous Provision;
 and yet, it is notorious, that, not only *Strabo* has made it
 a *stony and barren Country*, but all modern *Geographers*
 and *Travellers* have likewise given it a Character, that
 does not tend at all to its Advantage.

“ THE Conception which we have of God, is, that he
 is a *Being* of infinite Goodness, Justice, and Wisdom,
 who can do no cruel, no unrighteous, no weak, or self-
 repugnant Action; can neither be the Author or Abettor
 of any Wickedness in us; nor the Cause or Promoter of
 any Matter, that derogates from his own Glory and
 Greatness: And yet, when we read of his *hardening*
Pharaoh's Heart, we must allow it to be an Inconsistency
 with his *Goodness*; of his ordering the *Israelites* to *spoil*
the Egyptians, an Infraction upon his *Justice*; and of
 his permitting the *Magicians* to do the like Miracles
 with his Servant *Moses*, a Diminution of his own *Power*,
 and, in some Measure, a cancelling his own *Credentials*:
 For how shall we know that Miracles are true, and really
 wrought by the Finger of God, when God himself im-
 powers evil Spirits, either to work exactly the same, or

A. M.
 2433, &c.
 Ant. Chris.
 1571, &c.
 From Exod.
 i. to Chap.
 xiii.

A. M. 2433, &c. Ant. Christ. 1571, &c. From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.

“ to *mimick* them in so artful a Manner, that the most curious and attentive Eye shall not be able to discern the Difference?

“ THOUGH, therefore, we can give no Reason, why *Moses* shou’d be so very *complaisant* to *Pharaoh*, as to give him Notice of the Time, when he intended to inflict, or remove a *Plague*; yet we can assign a very good one, why *Pharaoh* shou’d send for the *Magicians* and *Sorcerers* to confront *Moses*: Nor is it a bad Apology for his Noncompliance with God’s Command to release his People, that he saw some of the self-same Miracles, as were pretended to be *divine*, very dexterously done, either by the *Fascination* of some evil Spirit, or by the mere Power and Force of *Magick*.”

Answer’d,
by shewing
the Revolution,
which
happen’d in
Egypt.

To account, in some Measure, for the Occasion of the Sufferings of the *Israelites* in the Land of *Egypt*, we must observe, that, in the fifth Year of *Concharis*, (whom *Josephus*, from *Manetho*, calls *Timeus*, and who, according to *Syncellus*, was the twenty-fifth King of the Land of *Tanis*, or *Lower Egypt*;) there came a numerous Army of unknown People, and invaded *Egypt* on a sudden. They over-ran both the *Upper* and *Lower Egypt*; burn’d the Cities, kill’d the Inhabitants, and, having, in a little Time, subdu’d all before them, made one of their Leaders, whose Name was *Salatis*, their King; who, as soon as he was settled on the Throne, laid the Land under *Tribute*, made its antient Inhabitants his *Slaves*, and gave the Possession of their Estates to his own People. Who this *Salatis* and his Followers (who call’d themselves *Pastors* or *Shepherds*) were, is not so easy a Matter to discover. The most probable Conjecture is, that they were some of the *Horites*, whom the Children of *Esau* drove out of *Seir*, (a Country, which lay to the *East* and *South* of the *Dead-Sea*) because the *Horites* were a People, who liv’d by Pasturage, and happen’d to be expell’d their own Country much about this Time. *Egypt* indeed was a very flourishing Kingdom, but so far from being famous for War, that we read of none of their Exploits of this Kind from the Time of their first Establishment, to this very Day. They consum’d their Time in Ease, and Wealth, and Luxury; and therefore the *Horites* (if they were the *Horites*) might easily conquer them, and gain themselves a Settlement in their Kingdom, even as the *Arcadians* did in *Thrace*, and the *Pelasgi*, and afterwards the *Trojans*, in *Italy*.

How-

HOWEVER this be, the Government of *Egypt* being by this Means subverted, the Protection and Happiness, which the *Israelites* enjoy'd, perish'd with it. This new King, as the Scripture calls him, knew nothing of *Joseph*, nor did he regard any Establishment, which he had made. He had forc'd his Way into *Egypt* with his Sword, and settled his People by Conquest, in such a Manner, and upon such Terms, as he thought fit: Only, as the *Hebrews* were a great and increasing People, inhabiting those Parts which he most suspected, and fearing lest, if any Invasion should happen from the *East*, or any Insurrection among the ancient Inhabitants, they possibly might join with them, and so endanger his new Acquisition, he thought it a Point of good Policy to use all proper Means to keep them effectually under.

ONE of the great *Mysteries* in the Dispensations of Providence, is, God's making Choice of the Children of *Israel* for his peculiar People, when it is so manifest (as *Moses* roundly tells them) that they were a stiff-neck'd Nation, and (b) *had been rebellious from the very first Day that he knew them.* (c) *God will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will shew Mercy to whom he will shew Mercy:* But, upon Supposition that the Children of *Israel* did not behave so well, during their Abode in *Egypt*, that they neglected the Worship of the true God, and comply'd too much with the idolatrous Customs of the Country; this will afford us Reason enough, why God might suffer their Sorrows to be multiply'd, and their Enemies to ride over their Backs. (d) *He does not, indeed, afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men;* and therefore, we may presume, that this severe Chastisement of his Rod was to make them smart for some great and national Defection; was to remind them of their sad Degeneracy from the Virtue of their Ancestors; and so (in the Phrase of the Prophet) (e) *to look unto the Rock, whence they were hewn, and to the Hole of the Pit, whence they were digged; to look unto Abraham their Father, and unto Sarah that bare them.*

BUT even putting the Case, that they had not been thus culpable; yet, since (f) *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth,* who can say, but that God might justly permit such Calamities to befall a People, whom he had adopted for his own, the more

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

And why
God suffer'd
the Israelites
to be dis-
treas'd.

(b) Deut. ix. 24. (c) Exod. xxxiii. 19. (d) Lam. iii. 35.
(e) Isai. li. 1, 2. (f) Heb. xii. 6.

A. M. to exercise their Virtue, and Patience, and Resignation to
 2433, &c. the Divine Will; (g) the more to keep up a Distinction
 Ant. Chris. between them and the *Egyptians*, which a friendly Usage
 1571, &c. might have destroy'd; the more to prepare, and make them
 From Exod. willing to leave *Egypt*, whenever God shou'd send them an
 i. to Chap. Order to depart; and the more to heighten the *Relish* of
 xiii. their future Deliverance, and to make them more thankful,
 more obedient to him, and his Injunctions, upon every Re-
 membrance of that *House of Bondage*, wherein they had
 suffer'd so much, and been so long detain'd?

Moses's
 Truth as an
 Historian. OF all the Writers of the *Histories of their own Times*,
 there is none to be compar'd to *Moses* in this Regard, that
 he reveals his own Faults and Blemishes, which he might
 have easily conceal'd, and conceals many Things, recorded
 in other Authors, which might have redounded to his own
 immortal Honour. He might have conceal'd the near *Con-*
sanguinity between his *Father* and *Mother*, which, in After-
 Ages, made Marriages unlawful, though then perhaps it
 might be dispens'd with. He might have conceal'd his *Mur-*
ther of the *Egyptian*, and, for Fear of Apprehension, his
Escape into *Midian*. He might have conceal'd his *Aver-*
sion to the Office of rescuing his Brethren from their Bon-
 dage; the many frivolous Excuses he made, and the flat
 Denial, he gave God at last, 'till God was in a Manner
 forc'd to obtrude it upon him. He might have conceal'd
 his Neglect in not circumcising his Son, which drew God's
 angry Resentment against him, so that he *met him*, and
 wou'd have *slain him*. He might have conceal'd some
 peevish Remonstrances, he made to God, when *Pharaoh*
 prov'd obstinate, and refus'd to comply. Above all, he
 might have conceal'd the whole Story of the *Magicians*,
 their working three Miracles equally with him, and every
 other Circumstance, that seem'd to eclipse his Glory: But,
 instead of this, we may observe, that, as he makes a large
 Chasm, in his Life, from his Childhood to his being *Forty*
Years old, and from *Forty* to *Fourscore*; so he has left us
 nothing of the incomparable *Beauty* and *Comeliness* of his
 Person; nothing of the Excellency of his natural *Parts*,
 and Politeness of his Education; nothing of his *Ethio-*
pian Expedition, the Conquests he made there, and the Posts
 of Honour, which he held in the *Egyptian Court*; nothing,
 indeed, of all the Transactions of the preceding Part of his
 Life, but what the Author to the *Hebrews* has taken Care
 to

(g) Sherlock, on Providence.

to transmit, viz. (b) that when he came to Years, he refus'd A. M. 2433, &c. Ant. Christ. 1571, &c. From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii. to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season. So that here we have a signal Evidence of the Truth and Honesty of our Historian, that in the Passages of his own Life, he conceals such, as an Impostor would be fond to emblazon, and discovers others, which any Man of Art and Design would be glad to conceal; though even some of these Passages, which, at first Sight, may seem to deserve some Blame, upon a farther Enquiry, may be found to be excusable at least, if not to be justify'd.

WHOEVER was the Author of the Book of *Job*, it is The Murder of the Egyptian justifi'd. certain, that he was a Writer of great Antiquity, and yet he makes it a Part of the Character of that righteous Man, that he (i) deliver'd the Poor, when he cried, and the Fatherless, and him that had no Helper; that he brake the Jaws of the Wicked, and plucked the Spoil out of his Teeth. If this may be thought to relate to *Job*, as a publick Magistrate only, there is a Direction in the *Proverbs* of Solomon, which seems to be of a more general Concernment; (k) If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto Death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, behold, we knew it not; doth not he, that pondereth the Heart, consider it? And he, that keepeth thy Soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every Man according to his Works? If this be thought again not to affect Moses at all, as being, at this Time, an Inhabitant of Egypt; there was in Egypt likewise a Law, (l) which perhaps, at this Time, was in Force, and obligatory upon all, viz. "That, whoever saw his Fellow-Creature, either killed by another, or violently assaulted, and did not either apprehend the Murderer, or rescue the Oppress'd if he cou'd, or, if he cou'd not, made not an Information thereof to the Magistrate, himself shou'd be put to Death." Now the History tells us, that, (m) when Moses went out unto his Brethren, he looked on their Burthens, and spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew. So that, it is but supposing, that this Egyptian was one of the Task-Masters (as the Burthens here mentioned seem to denote) who so barbarously treated the Hebrews, and was now going

(b) Heb. xi. 24, 25. (i) Job xxix. 12, 17. (k) Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. (l) Diodorus Siculus, l. 1, p. 69. (m) Exod. ii. 11.

A. M. going to beat one of them to Death; and, according to the
 2433, &c. Law of the Land (which seems indeed to be the Law of all
 Ant. Christ. Nations) then in being, he was oblig'd to interpose; and if,
 1571, &c. upon his Interposition, the *Egyptian* turn'd upon him, and
 From Exod. assaulted him briskly, (which is no hard Matter to imagine)
 i. to Chap. he was oblig'd, in his own Defence, to slay him.
 xiii.

(n) To complain to the Magistrate in this Case, and implore the Assistance of the Law, was to no Manner of Purpose. The whole Civil Power was lodg'd in such Hands, as had secret Instructions from Court to vex and ill-treat the *Israelites*; and when Matters were come to this *Crisis*, that Oppression rul'd, and the Government was turn'd into a mere *Latrocinny*, private Force, upon any proper Occasion, must be deem'd lawful in all, but in *Moses* much more so, since he was either mov'd and animated thereunto by a divine Impulse, or invested, before it happen'd, (as (o) *St Stephen's* Comment upon the Place gives us Reason to think he was so invested) with the Title, and Office of *Deliverer of the People of God*.

Why *Moses*
 desir'd to
 know God's
 Name.

THAT the Names both of *Persons* and *Things* were of the greatest Importance to be rightly understood, in order to attain the truest Knowledge, that cou'd be had, of their *Natures*, was the Opinion both of *Jews* and *Heathens*; and some of the earliest Writers of the *Christian Church* have speculated upon this Subject, with so much philosophical Subtlety, as to build thereon many foolish Fancies, and ridiculous Errors. It cannot be deny'd indeed, but that God, in giving some Names, that are recorded in Scripture, had respect to the Nature and Circumstances of the Persons, to whom they belong'd; and that, in Imitation of him, Men endeavour'd, even from the Beginning, to give Names as expressive of the Properties of the Things nam'd, as human Wisdom cou'd direct them: And therefore, without troubling ourselves with what the Ancients have offer'd concerning the *Science* of Names, we may from hence deduce the true Reason, why *Moses* desir'd to be inform'd, at this Time more especially, what the Name of God was.

IF we consider the small Advances, which Philosophy had made, we cannot imagine, that Men, at this Time, had a sufficient Knowledge of the Works of the *Creation*, to be able thereby to demonstrate the *Attributes* of God; nor cou'd they, by Speculation, form proper and just Notions of his *Nature*. Some of them indeed, the Philosophers of that
 Age,

(a) *Le Clerc's* Commentary in Locum. (o) Acts vii. 25.

Age, thought themselves wise enough to attempt these Subjects; but what was the Success? (p) *Professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools, and changed the Glory of the incorruptible God.* After they had speculated never so long on any Element, the *Fire, Air, or Water*, the Convex of the Firmament, the Circle of the Stars, or the Lights of Heaven, not forming true Notions of their Natures, they were either delighted with their *Beauty*, or astonish'd with their *Power*, and so framing very *high*, but *false* Estimates of them, they lost the Knowledge of the Work-Master, and took the Parts of his Workmanship to be God.

MOSES, indeed, might be a Man of excellent Parts; but we carry our Compliment too far, if we think him not liable to have fallen into these, or perhaps more dangerous Errors, had he endeavour'd to form his Notions of God, either from the *Egyptian*, or any other Learning, that was then extant in the World. *Faith*, or a Belief of what God had reveal'd, was the only Principle, upon which he cou'd hope rightly to *know God*; and this was the *Principle*, which *Moses* here desires to go upon. For, as the *Revelation*, which God had hitherto made of himself, was but short and imperfect; so *Moses*, by desiring to know God's Name, desir'd that he might have some Revelation of his Nature and Attributes vouchsaf'd him; for, that the *Name* of God does frequently signify the Divine Nature and Attributes, is evident from several Passages in Scripture.

WHEN *Moses* desir'd to see God's Glory, he obtain'd, that the *Name* of the Lord shou'd be proclaim'd before him, and the Proclamation was; (q) *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin.* And, in like Manner, *Isaiab*, prophesying what the Messiah shou'd be, declares his *Name* to be (r) *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* In both these Places, and many more, that might be produc'd to the same Purpose, the *Name* denotes the *Nature* of God; and therefore the Design of *Moses*, in asking God's Name, was to obtain an Information of the Divine Attributes, in order to carry a Report of them to his Brethren. And indeed, considering that *Moses* was the first, that ever carry'd a Message from God to Man, it was natural for the *Israëlites* to ask him

(p) Rom. i. 22, 23.

(r) Isa. ix. 6.

(q) Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

A. M. him by what *Name*, or peculiar *Attribute*, he had made himself known unto him, so as to authorize him to speak to them, in such a Manner, as no Man before had ever done; which Question he cou'd not pretend to answer, unless God, by Revelation, thought fit to enable him, and therefore he desir'd to be confirm'd (as far as the Divine Goodness wou'd be pleas'd to discover) what *Name* he wou'd be call'd by, as knowing very well, that, by obtaining *this*, he might form proper Notions of his Nature and Perfections.

The Propriety and Meaning of God's Name.

AND, accordingly, we may observe, that this great Appellation, which God is here pleas'd to give of himself, expresses his incomprehensible Nature, in such open and proper Characters, that St. *Hilary* (as he tells us of himself) lighting on these Words, before he was a *Christian*, and as he was musing about God and Religion, was struck with Admiration, because he cou'd think of Nothing so proper and essential to God, as *to be*. God himself, however, chuses to express the Word in the *future* Tense, or Purpose, (as some imagine) to shew, that he is the only Being, that can truly say, *I shall, or will be, what I am*; for as much as all other Beings derive their Existence from him, and may be depriv'd of that Existence, whenever he pleases.

WHAT Knowledge the wisest of the *Heathen* World might have of this *incommunicable* Name of God, without the Help of Revelation, is a Matter of great Uncertainty. It is more than probable, that *Plato's* Definition of a God, viz. *A Being, that is always, and had no Beginning*, was borrow'd from these Words of *Moses*: But, there is a Passage in *Plutarch*, which mentions an Inscription in the Temple of *Delphos*, consisting of these Letters E I, a Contraction, as some imagine, of E I M I, *I am*, which (according to the Opinion of (s) a great Judge in those Days) was one of the most perfect Names and Titles of the Deity, seeing it imported, that, "tho' our Being is uncertain, precarious, temporary, and subject to change, so that no Man can say of himself, in a strict and absolute Sense, *I am*; yet we may, with great Propriety, give the Deity this Appellation, because God is independent, immutable, eternal, always, and every-where the same;" for (t) *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

BUT all this wou'd not work upon *Moses* to undertake the Office, to which God call'd him; and yet, when we

come

(s) *Ammonius.*

(t) Rev. i. 8, 11.

come to consider his Case, we cannot altogether accuse him of Perverseness or Obstinacy. About forty Years before, he had felt some extraordinary Motion in himself, and, as he was then in the Fervour of his Youth, he took it for a certain Indication, that God intended to make use of him as an Instrument for his People's Deliverance; but then he was a far greater Man, than now. The Princess, (if alive) who had adopted him for her Son, supported his Interest at Court; or, if dead, had, in all Probability, left him a Fortune sufficient to procure himself one. But now, Age had made him cool and considerate. The Loss of his Patroness had quash'd all aspiring Thoughts. A long Habitude had perfectly reconcil'd him to an obscure Course of Life: And therefore, as one loth to be rouz'd from his Solitude, (u) *who am I*, says he, *that I shou'd go unto Pharaoh, and that I shou'd bring forth the Children of Israel out of Egypt?*

He had already experimentally known the Ingratitude and Disingenuity of the *Hebrews*: (x) *When he supposed they wou'd have understood, that God, by his Hand, wou'd have delivered them*, he voluntarily offer'd his Service; but their Rejection of him, when in the Height of his Power, upon so great an Alteration in his Circumstances, took away all Hopes of Success in so difficult an Enterprize. So that the principal Error, which *Moses* incurr'd upon this Occasion, was no more than a Distemper incident to the Generality of Mankind, viz. the measuring of God by himself, and judging of Events from the Probabilities or Improbabilities of *second Causes*.

BUT there is another Reason, not to be dissembled, which might possibly deter *Moses* from returning into *Egypt*, and that was the Blood of the Man, for which he had fled into *Midian*, and his certain Knowledge of the Laws of that Land, viz. (y) that "whoever kill'd another, whether he " was bond, or free, was not to escape with his own Life." Just before God appear'd to him in the Bush, and had this Discourse with him, we read, that (z) *the King of Egypt died*, that King, to wit, in whose Reign he had slain the *Egyptian*, and who sought to apprehend him, that he might put him to death: But, as *Moses* kept no Manner of Correspondence with *Egypt*, the News of this King's Death might not have reach'd his Ears, or if it had, he might reasonably think, that some surviving Relation of the slain Man might enter a Process against him for the Murder. So that

here

(u) *Exod. iii. 11.*

(x) *Acts vii. 25.*

(y) *Diodorus Siculus, l. i. p. 70.*

(z) *Exod. ii. 23.*

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From *Exod.*
i. to Chap.
xiii.
Why Moses
was so back-
ward to go
into Egypt
to rescue his
Brethren.

A. M. here he fell into a Passion, which is hardly separable from hu-
 2433, &c. man Nature, viz. the Love of Life, and Dread of Punish-
 Ant. Chriſt. ment; and which in him was the more excusable, because
 1471, &c. God, as yet, had not clear'd his Mind from the Fear and
 From Exod. i. to Chap. Suspicion it lay under.
 xiii.

It must not be deny'd then, but that there were some Tokens of human Frailty in *Moses's last Refusal* of the Commission, which was offer'd him; but then there is this to say in Excuse, that the most excellent Persons are the least forward to embrace the Offers of great Preferment. For if no Authority (according (a) to *Plato*) is design'd for the Benefit of him that governs, but of those that are govern'd; no wise and considerate Man will voluntarily take upon him the Government of a People, but must either be hir'd; or compell'd to it: And therefore *Moses*, considering the great Weight of the Employment, out of a due Sense of his own Infirmities, declin'd it as long as he cou'd. And tho' Mention is made in Scripture of the (b) *Lord's being angry with him*, yet this Anger cou'd amount to no more; than such a Displeasure, as a Father conceives at his Child, when, notwithstanding all that can be said and done, to create in him a just Confidence, he still continues bashful and diffident of himself.

It may be thought perhaps by some a farther Excuse for *Moses's Backwardness*, or, at least, no great Encouragement to his Undertaking, that God makes the Sign, wherewith he wou'd seem to ratify his Promise, of a Date subsequent to his Commission. (c) *I will certainly be with thee, and this shall be a Token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the People out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this Mountain.* For how can a future Event serve for a Sign of the Accomplishments of a present Promise? The common Solution of this Difficulty is——That God design'd this for a Token to *Moses*, in order to root out of his Heart all Remains of *Infidelity*, which might perhaps be found in him, even after he had delivered the *Israelites* out of Bondage; but this is a Sense by no Means allowable. For how can we suppose, that, after God had brought out his People with an *high Hand*, and a *stretch'd-out Arm*; by making himself justly terrible to *Pharaoh* and all his Court; by turning Rivers of Water into Blood; by changing the Day into Night; by slaying all the First-born in *Egypt*, and by causing the King and his whole Army, to be swallow'd up

(a) De Repub. 1. 1.

(b) Exod. iv. 14.

(c) Exod. iii. 12.

up in the same Waves of the Sea, which (d) were a Wall on the Right-hand and on the Left, and open'd a Way for his own People to pass: How can we suppose, I say, that this faithful Servant of his shou'd have the least Doubt; whether this mighty Deliverance was to be ascrib'd to Providence or Chance? Or, if there was any farther Occasion for Tokens, why shou'd a smaller, than any of the foregoing, be propos'd? Or, when propos'd, why shou'd it be presum'd sufficient to produce an Effect, which others, much more considerable, were found incompetent to do?

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

To evade these Questions, some of the Jewish Doctors have devis'd a new Partition of the Words; and, when God says to Moses, *this shall be a Token to thee*, they think he means it of the Bush, from whence he spake, all on Flames without consuming, which was, questionless, Token enough, that God had sent him; and thereupon they make the subsequent Words the Beginning of a fresh Sentence, and declarative of a farther Purpose, for which God wou'd bring forth his People out of Egypt, even that, from that Mountain, he might give them a Law, which was to be the Rule and Directory of their Religious Worship and Service. But there is no Necessity for this Subterfuge, when the Difficulty may be fairly resolv'd, by distinguishing the Promises of God into two Kinds; those, that depend on certain Conditions, and those that have no Conditions at all.

To be the Messenger of the former Kind of Promises is exercising a glorious Ministry, but then it is a Ministry attended with Danger. He, upon whom God confers it, may live in perpetual Fear of promising something without Effect; because they, to whom the Promise is made, may forfeit it by not performing the requisite Condition: But Nothing can discourage the Man, to whom God has given a Commission of the latter Kind, because the Infallibility of the Event supports him against all the Obstacles, that can possibly arise.

Now to apply this to the Case in Hand. When God promises Moses a Deliverance of his People, Moses might fear, that their Impiety, or Unbelief, might be a Bar, and Obstruction to their Deliverance; and therefore, God, in order to cure him of this Fear, endeavours to make him sensible that the Promise, he now gives him, was not indefinite and general, like those which depended on certain Conditions; but that it was one of those, whose Accomplishment was de-

creed

(d) Exod. xiv. 22.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

creed in the divine *Councils*, independent on any Event, or any Condition; and therefore he not only *promises*, but *foretels*, and particularises the nicest and minutest Circumstances. He not only acquaints him, that his People shall be deliver'd, but he describes to him the exact Place, where, after they found themselves set at Liberty, they were to pay their Homage to their Deliverer: And this *Detail* is the Token, that God gives him of the Certainty of the Event.

To illustrate this by a parallel Instance. When the Armies of *Sennacherib* besieg'd *Jerusalem*, *Hezekiah* began to fear that they wou'd take it: To secure him against that Fear, *Isaiah* promises him an approaching Deliverance. *Hezekiah* is afraid, lest the Sins of the People shou'd stand between him, and the divine Goodness: To secure him against this Apprehension likewise, and to convince him, that the Resolution, God had taken to deliver his People, was *irrespective* and *infallible*; (*e*) *this shall be a Sign to thee*, says he, *ye shall eat this Year such Things, as grow of themselves, and in the second Year, which springeth of the same, and in the third Year sow ye, and reap, and plant Vineyards, and eat the Fruit thereof.* To return to *Moses*.

HAD this Promise indeed been the only Sign, which God had given him, it might have administer'd some Umbrage of Suspicion; but when it was attended with several other Signs and mighty Wonders, it cou'd not but be of great Use for the Confirmation of his Faith in his present Undertaking, since he knew it was as certain, as if it had already been effected, because it proceeded from the Mouth of the Almighty, whose Promises, when absolute and unconditional, are always *Yea and Amen*.

Moses censur'd for neglecting to circumcise his Son.

I KNOW of few Passages more difficult to be understood, than that which contains the Adventure of *Moses's* Family in the Inn, (*f*) *where the Lord met him, and sought to kill him, until Zipporah took a sharp Stone, and cut off the Fore-Skin of her Son, and cast it at his Feet, and said, surely a bloody Husband art thou to me.* *Zipporah* is commonly represented as a *perverse* and *froward* Woman, who look'd upon Circumcision as a *cruel* and *unnecessary* Ordinance, and therefore prevail'd with her Husband, (who perhaps might be too indulgent to her in the Case of her younger Son) to omit it. But it ought to be consider'd, that, as she was a *Midianitish* Woman, and descended from *Abraham* by his Wife *Keturah*, she cou'd not have any Aversion to the Rite of

of *Circumcision*, in which she acquiesc'd, in the Case of her elder Son *Gershom*, and in which she was so expert, that, upon her Husband's Incapacity, she herself perform'd the Operation upon the *Younger*.

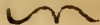
A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

THE *Midianites* might perhaps, in this Respect, imitate their Neighbours the *Ishmaelites*, who did not circumcise their Children, until they were thirteen Years of Age; and, for this Reason, some have imagin'd, that *Moses's* Son had not, as yet, undergone the Operation: But *Moses* knew very well, that there was a *Limitation* of Time in the Institution of the Ordinance, and therefore the more probable Reason for this Omission seems to be, that they were now upon their Journey, when *Zipporah* was brought to-bed, and that therefore they might think, that the Danger of the Wound to the Infant might excuse the deferring of his Circumcision, as it excus'd the *Israelites afterwards* in the Wilderness.

BUT, as it does not appear that *Moses* lay under any Necessity of taking his Family, especially his Wife with Child, along with him; so this Omission of circumcising his Son might be imputed to him as a greater Fault than ordinary, because he may be suppos'd to have understood the Will of God, concerning this *Rite*, more perfectly, than any other Man; and was, but just before, reminded of the Benefit of that *Covenant*, whereof this Ordinance was a Seal, and some Part of which he was going now to take Possession of.

BUT how absurd wou'd it have been, for *Moses* to be made a *Law-giver* to others, when himself liv'd in an open Violation of God's Laws? Or to be appointed a chief Ruler and Instructor of the *Israelites*, to whom he was to inculcate the Obligation of this Ordinance, and on whom he was to inflict *Pains* and *Penalties* for their Neglect of it, when himself was guilty of the same Sin? Nor was this Omission only a great Sin in itself, but a great *Scandal* likewise to the *Israelites*, who, by his Example, might very likely be led into the same Miscarriage, and be tempted to suspect the *Call* of a Person, who shew'd such a visible Contempt of God's Law. As *Moses* therefore was a *publick* Person, and just invested with a *Commission* from God, his Disobedience to a known Law was more enormous, his Example might have done more Mischief, and therefore God's Severity against him, either in afflicting him with some sudden *Sickness*, or affrightening him with some terrible *Apparition*, was necessary to remind him of his Duty. And, accordingly, whatever the Means was, we find, that it brought to his

A. M.
2435, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.



Wife's Remembrance the Neglect of their not having circumcised the Child; but we injure her Character, if we think, that the Words, which she is made to utter upon this Occasion, were any angry *Taunt*, or *Exprobration* to her Husband, since, (according to the Exposition (g) of a very learned Writer upon the Text) they are not directed to him, but to her Son; and are not the Effect of any angry Resentment, but a *solemn* Form of Speech made use of at the Time of any Child's *Circumcision*.

His Wife's
Conduct set
right.

SEVERAL of the *Jewish* Doctors tell us, that it was a Custom of the *Hebrew* Women to call their Children, when they were circumcised, by the Name of *Chatan*, i. e. *Spouse*, as if they were now espoused to God; And to this Custom the *Apostle* perhaps might allude, when he tells his *Corinthians*, (b) *I am jealous over you with an holy Jealousy; for I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ*. However this be, (i) *Zipporah*, who was an *Arabian* Woman, might the rather make use of this *Term*, and apply it to her Son, because the *Arabians* (whose Language has a great Affinity to the *Hebrew*, and who themselves, as Descendants from *Abraham*, did, all along, use the Rite of *Circumcision*) make the Word *Chatan* signify to-circumcise, and *Chiten*, *Circumcision* (as manifestly appears in their Translation of the *New Testament*); which can no otherwise be accounted for, than from this Custom of calling a Child *Chatan*, when he is circumcised, even as we, because a Child in Baptism is made a *Christian*, use the Word *christen* for to baptize.

If *Zipporah*'s Words then were directed, not to her Husband, but the Child whom she had just now circumcised, their proper Meaning must be, *I, by this Circumcision, pronounce thee to be a Member of the Church*: For the Child, on the Day of his Circumcision, (says *Aben Ezra* upon this Text) was us'd to be call'd *Chatan*, because he was then first join'd to the People of God, and, as it were, espous'd unto God. And if this be the sense of the Matter, *Zipporah* was so far from expressing any angry Resentment, or giving her Husband any opprobrious Language upon this Occasion, that she only did the Office of circumcising her Son, when she perceiv'd that the Delay of it had given Offence to God, and, in doing that Office, pronounc'd the Words over him, which us'd to be pronounc'd, whenever that Ceremony was duly perform'd.

THIS

(g) *Mede's* Discourse 14.

(b) 2 Cor. xi. 2.

(i) *Mede's* l. i. Discourse 14.

THIS is an Interpretation, which, not only the *Septuagint*, and *Chaldee Paraphrast* seem to countenance; but what most modern Masters of *Jewish Learning* have approv'd. And, as it seems to clear the Character of *Zipporah*, so may it receive some farther Confirmation from the subsequent Behaviour of the *Angel*, who, as soon as he saw the Ceremony perform'd, and heard the solemn Form pronounc'd over the Child, (*k*) *let Moses go, and did not slay him*; whereas, had the Operation been done in the Manner, that some pretend, *grudgingly*, and of *Necessity*, with inward Regret, and Words of Reproach to her Husband, this (one wou'd think) wou'd have incens'd the Angel, either to have continu'd the Punishment (be it what it will) upon *Moses*, or rather to have transferr'd it to his Wife, who, upon this Supposition, seems most justly to have deserv'd it.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

UPON the whole therefore it appears, that the Words of *Zipporah* were address'd to her Son, and not her Husband, and were the usual Form of Admission into the *Jewish Church*; that it was at the Child's Feet that she laid the Foreskin, and not threw it at her Husband in Anger, when she spake the Words above-mention'd; and that, in this whole Affair, there was neither any Squabble between *Moses* and his Wife, nor any indecent Behaviour, or opprobrious Language us'd by her.

No Fallacy
in Moses's
Demand.

It cannot be deny'd indeed, but that God, from the very first Day, that he appointed *Moses* to go to *Pharaoh*, intended to deliver his People from their Captivity, and when once they were departed out of *Egypt*, that they shou'd never return again; and yet they are directed to demand only to go *three Days Journey into the Wilderness*. This was not the *whole* of what was intended; but *Moses* lay under no Obligation to let so bitter an Enemy, as *Pharaoh*, into his whole Design. It is sufficient to absolve him from any Imputation of *Disingenuity*, that he acted according to the Instructions, which God gave him; (*l*) and God certainly was not oblig'd to acquaint *Pharaoh* with all his Mind, but only so far as he thought proper: And, for wise and good Reasons, he thought proper to make the Demand no higher at first, than *three Days Journey into the Wilderness*, that, by his Denial of so modest a Request, he might make his Tyranny more manifest, and the divine Vengeance upon him more just and remarkable.

X 3

IT

(*k*) Exod. iv. 26.(*l*) *Pool's Annotations in Locum.*

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

The Fruit-
fulness of
the Land of
Palestine.

IT must be acknowledg'd again, that the Expression of *flowing with Milk and Honey*, when apply'd to any Country, like that of King Solomon's *making Silver to be in Jerusalem like Stones (m)*, is *hyperbolical*. It denotes very rich Pastures and Grounds, which shou'd feed Cattle yielding Abundance of Milk, and which shou'd produce great Plenty of Flowers and Plants, for the Bees to make Honey. It represents indeed a general Fruitfulness all the Country over; for which *Palestine* (according to the Account of Writers of no mean Character) was certainly once famous, however it came into *Strabo's* Head to disparage it. For (to mention an Author or two of some Note) *Aristeus*, who was *there* to bring the *Seventy Interpreters* into *Egypt*, tells us, that immense and prodigious was the Produce and Plenty, it afforded of Trees, Fruits, Pasture, Cattle, Honey, besides the Spicery, Gold, and precious Stones, imported from *Arabia*. (n) *Josephus* describes the Country, as it was in his Time, i. e. in the Time of our Saviour and his Apostles, as most remarkably fruitful and pleasant, and abounding in the very choicest Productions of the Earth. *Bochart*, much later, and since the Country has been inhabited by the *Turks*, liv'd in it for the Space of ten Years, and, as he was particularly curious and diligent in informing himself in every Thing, speaks the greatest Things imaginable of the Richness of its Soil, and the Choiceness of its Products: And (to name no more) our own Countryman, Mr. *Sandys*, who, in the Beginning of the last Century, travell'd through it, gives it the Character of a *Land adorn'd with beautiful Mountains, and luxurious Valleys; the Rocks producing excellent Waters, and no Part empty of Delight, or Profit*: And certainly those, who either were *Natives*, or have sojourn'd a long Time in a Country, may be suppos'd to have a more perfect Knowledge of it, than a *Foreigner*, who liv'd at a Distance, as *Strabo* did.

The Truth is, if we consider of what a small Compass the Land of *Canaan* is, and yet what a prodigious Number of Inhabitants (both before, and after the *Israelites* became Masters of it) it maintain'd, we must conclude, it cou'd not but deserve the Character, which the Authors above-cited have given us of it; and the Barrenness and Poverty of its Soil, which some *modern Travellers* seem to complain of, must be imputed either to its Want of Tillage and Cultivation,

(m) 1 Kings x. 27.
figt of *Palestine*.

(n) Antiq. l. 5. and *Fuller's Pisgah*.

tion, (which the *Turks*, its present Inhabitants, are utterly ignorant of) or to the particular Judgment of God, who, for the *Wickedness* of any Nation, has frequently perform'd, what he threaten'd to the *Jews* of old; (o) *I will break the Pride of your Power, and I will make your Heaven as Iron, and your Earth as Brass, and your Strength shall be spent in vain; for your Land shall not yield her Increase, neither shall the Trees of the Land yield their Fruits.*

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

SEVERAL Things are said in Scripture to be done by God, which are only permitted by him to come to pass in their ordinary Course and Procedure: And thus God may be said to *harden Pharaoh's Heart*, only because he did not interpose, but suffer'd him to be carry'd, by the Bent of his own Passions, to that inflexible Obstinacy, which prov'd his Ruin. That *Moses*, to whom God us'd these Expressions concerning *Pharaoh*, understood them in this Sense, is evident from many Parts of his Behaviour to him, and especially from his earnestly intreating him to be persuaded, and to let the People go. (p) Had *Moses* known, or ever thought, that God had doom'd *Pharaoh* to unavoidable Ruin, it had been an unwarrantable Presumption in him to have persuaded him to have avoided it: But that *Moses*, with all possible Application, endeavour'd to make an Impression upon *Pharaoh* for his Good, is manifest from this Passage, (q) *glory over me, i. e. do me the Honour to believe me, when I shall intreat for thee, and for thy Servants*; wherein he makes an earnest Address to *Pharaoh*, to induce him to be persuaded to part with the People, which he certainly never wou'd have done, had he been satisfy'd that God himself had prevented his Compliance, on Purpose to bring him to Ruin.

The harden-
ing Pha-
raoh's Heart
not from
God.

IT is farther to be observ'd therefore, that, not only in the *Hebrew*, but in most other Languages, the Occasion of an Action, and what in itself has no Power to produce it, is very often put for the *efficient Cause* thereof. Thus in the Case before us: (r) God sends *Moses* to *Pharaoh*, and *Moses*, in his Presence, does such miraculous Works, as wou'd have had an Effect upon any other: But because he saw some of the Miracles imitated by the *Magicians*; because the Plagues, which God sent, came gradually upon him,

X 4

(o) Levit. xxvi. 19. 20.

Vol. II. l. 9.

(q) Exod. viii. 9.

(p) Shuckford's Connection,

(r) Le Clerc's Com-

mentary.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

him, and, by the Intercession of *Moses*, were constantly remov'd; he thence took *occasion*, instead of being *soften'd* by this *Alternative* of Mercy and Judgment, to become more *sullen* and *obdurate*. When *Pharaoh* (as the Text tells us) *saw that the Rain, and the Hail, and the Thunder ceas'd, he sinned yet more, and hardened his Heart*. The Mercy of God, which shou'd have led him to Repentance, had a contrary Effect upon him, and made him more *obstinate*: “(s) For an harden'd Heart (as one expresses it) is neither cut by Compunction, nor soften'd by any Sense of Pity. It is neither mov'd by Intreaties, nor yields to Threatnings, nor feels the Smart of Scourges. It is ungrateful to Benefactors, treacherous to Counsels, sullen under Judgments, fearless in Dangers, forgetful of Things past, negligent of Things present, and improvident for the future;” All which bad Qualities seem to have concentr'd in *Pharaoh*. For, whatever might have contributed to his *Obduration* at first, it is plain, that, in the Event, even when the *Magicians* own'd a divine Power in what they saw done, and were quite confounded, when they felt themselves smitten with the Boils, and might thereupon very likely persuade him to surrender; he is so far from relenting, that he does not so much as ask a Remove of the Plague. It was therefore entirely agreeable to the Rules of *divine* Justice, when Nothing wou'd reclaim this wicked King; when even That, which wrought upon the Ministers of *Satan*, made no Impression upon him, to let his Crime become his Punishment, and to leave him to *eat the bitter Fruit of his own Ways, and to be fill'd with his own De-vices*.

That the
Hebrews, at
their Depar-
ture, did not
rob the E-
gyptians.

THE *Israelites*, we own, did carry out of the Land of their Captivity several Things of great Value, which they had from the *Egyptians*: But then we are to consider, that the Word, which our Translators render *borrow*, does more properly signify *to ask of one*; and what they render *to lend*, is as literally *to give*. For the Case stood thus between the two Nations. (t) The *Egyptians* had been thoroughly terrify'd with what had passed, and especially with the last terrible Plague upon their *First-born*, and were now willing to give the *Hebrews* any Thing, or every Thing, only to get quit of them. They therefore brib'd them to be gone, and courted them with *Presents*, so very *profusely*, as even to impoverish

(s) Vide *Patrick's* Commentary.
cated, Part II.

(t) Scripture vindicated,

impoverish themselves. But for this the *Israelites* were not at all culpable, because they only accepted of what the others gave them, and what was freely given, they doubtless had a Right to detain.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

BUT suppose that the *strict* Sense of the Word was, that they really did *borrow* many valuable Things of the *Egyptians*; yet it is a Truth allow'd on all Hands, that God, who is the supreme *Lord* of all Things, may, when he pleases, and in what Manner he pleases, *transfer* the Rights of Men from one to another. Considering then, that God was now become the King of the *Israelites*, in a proper and peculiar Manner; and considering farther, what insufferable Wrongs the King and People of *Egypt* had done to this People of God, who were now become his peculiar Subjects and *Proprietary Lieges*; this Act of *spoiling the Egyptians* (even in the harshest Sense of the Word) was, according to the *Laws of Nations*, more justifiable, than Royal Grants of *Letters of Mart*, or other such like Remedies, as Kings are accustomed to make Use of against other *Powers*, that have wrong'd their Subjects, or suffer'd them to be wrong'd by those, that are under their Command, without making a proper Restitution. In short, whatever the *Hebrews* took from the *Egyptians*, they took, and possess'd it by the *Law of Reprisals*, i. e. by Virtue of a special Warrant from the Lord himself, who was now become, not their *God* only, but their peculiar *King*.

* THAT some Compensation was due, in strict Justice, from the *Egyptians* to the *Hebrews*, for the great Services they

* In the *Gemarah* of the *Sanhedrim*, there is a memorable Story concerning this Transaction. In the Time of *Alexander the Great*, the *Egyptians* brought an Action against the *Israelites*, desiring that they might have the Land of *Canaan*, in Satisfaction for all they had borrow'd of them, when they went out of *Egypt*. To this *Gibeon Ben Kofam*, who was Advocate for the *Jews*, reply'd, That, before they made this Demand, they must prove what they alledg'd, *viz.* That the *Israelites* borrow'd any thing of their *Ancestors*: To which the *Egyptians* thought it sufficient to say, that they found it recorded in their own Books. Well then, says the Advocate, look into the same Books, and ye will find that the Children of *Israel* liv'd *four hundred and thirty Years* in *Egypt*; (Exod. xii. 40.) pay us then, said he, for all the Labours and Toils of so many thousand People, as you employ'd us all that Time, and we will restore what we borrow'd; to which they had not a Word to answer.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

they had done them, is what can hardly be deny'd: But supposing this *Borrowing* and *Lending* between them had been without any such Regard, yet, if the *Israelites* acquir'd a Right to these Things afterwards, there was then no Obligation for their making any Restitution. Now, that they acquir'd such a Right is manifest from the *Egyptians* pursuing them in an *hostile Manner*, and with a Purpose to destroy them, after they had given them free Liberty to depart; by which Hostility and Perfidiousness they plainly forfeited their Right to what they had only lent before. For this *hostile Attempt* (which wou'd have warrant'd the *Israelites* to have fallen upon the *Egyptians*, and spoil'd them of their Goods) did certainly warrant them to keep them, when they had them; so that now they became the *rightful Possessors* of what they had only upon Loan, and cou'd not have detain'd, without Fraud and Injustice, before.

THUS, in what View soever we contemplate this Fact, whether it be a voluntary *Donation*, made by the *Egyptians*; or an Act of *Reprisal*, made by the *Hebrews*; or a Deed of *Forfeiture*, which the former incurr'd by an unjust Invasion upon the latter; the *Hebrews* will be found not so culpable, as some wou'd make them: Nor can we see, where the pretended ill Tendency of such a *Precedent* can be, since it is allow'd on all Hands, that it is, in no Case, to be follow'd, unless it be evidently commanded by the same *divine Authority*.

MIRACLES indeed, we own, are the *Seals* and *Attestations* of God, to evidence the Truth of any Thing, that he is desirous the World should believe; but if *Magicians*, by the Assistance of evil Spirits, have Power to impose upon our Senses, or to work such Wonders, as seem altogether *miraculous*, we are left under a great Uncertainty how to determine our Judgments in this Case: And therefore, to give a full Solution to this Part of the Objection, we shall first premise something concerning the Nature of *Magick*, and how far its Power may extend towards the Operation of Miracles; thence proceed to enquire who the particular *Magicians* were, who pretended to oppose *Moses*, and upon what

answer. *Patrick's Commentary*. It is to be observ'd however, that this Passage in *Exodus*, which the Advocate refers to, had respect to all the Pilgrimages of *Abraham* and his Posterity, from the Time of his setting out from *Charran* in *Mesopotamia*, to this their Departure out of *Egypt*, as we shall have Occasion to shew very soon. Vid. p. 355.

what Account it was, that *Pharaoh* sent for them; thence to consider whether the Miracles, they *seemingly* wrought, were *real* or *fictitious*, or if *real*, why God permitted them to perform them; and thence to examine, whether this Permission tended any Way to prejudice the *Evidence* of *Moses's* Mission from God, or rather not to confirm it, seeing the Difference between them and *Moses*, in this Contest of working Miracles, was so visible and conspicuous.

THOSE, who have professedly treated of the *Magick Art*, have generally divided it into three Kinds, *natural*, *artificial*, and *diabolical*. (u) The first of these is no other, than *natural Philosophy*, but highly improv'd and advanc'd, whereby the Person, that is well skill'd in the Power and Operation of *natural Bodies*, is able to produce many wonderful Effects, mistaken by the Illiterate for *diabolical* Performances, even tho' they lie perfectly within the *Verge* of *Nature*. *Artificial* Magick is what we call *Legerdemain*, or Slight of *Hand*, whose Effects are far from being what they seem. They are Deceptions and Impostures, the very Tricks of *Jugglers* (as we corrupt the Word *Foculatores*) far from exceeding the Power of Art, and yet what many Times pass with the Vulgar for *diabolical* likewise. *Diabolical* Magick is that, which is done by the Help of the Devil, who, having great Skill in *natural* Causes, and a large Command over the *Air*, and other *Elements*, may assist those, that are in League and Covenant with him (in Scripture call'd *Wizards*, *Sorcerers*, *Diviners*, *Enchanters*, *Chaldeans*, and such as had *familiar Spirits*) to do many strange and astonishing Things.

To deny that there ever were such Men as these, is to slight the Authority of all History; and, to guess at the probable *Rise* and *Original* of them, we may suppose it to be this—(x) That God, being pleas'd to admit the holy Patriarchs into Conference with him, the Devil endeavour'd to do the same; and, to retain Men in their Obedience to him, pretended to make Discoveries of secret Things; and that, when God was pleas'd to work Miracles for the Truth, he, in like Manner, directed those, who were *familiar* with him, how to invoke his Help, for the Performance of such strange Things, as might confirm the World in their *Error*.

UNDER

(u) Bishop *Wilkins's* Tract of Magick, and *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. (x) *Patrick's* Commentary in Locum.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

UNDER which of these Denominations, *natural, artificial, or diabolical*, the Magicians, who set themselves in Opposition to the Servants of the Most High God, are to be rank'd, we have no Instructions from Scripture; but it seems highly probable, that neither wou'd *Pharaoh* have call'd together those of the least Capacity and Repute, neither wou'd the *Devil* (as far as his Power extended) have been backward to assist his *Votaries* upon such a solemn and momentous an Occasion, as this.

WHO the Principal of these Magicians were, our *sacred* Historian makes no mention: But several, both *Jewish* and *Heathen* Authors (from whom (y) *St. Paul*, without doubt, borrow'd their Names) have inform'd us, that among the *Egyptians* they were call'd *Jannes*, and *Jambres*, which, to give them a *Latin* Termination, wou'd be *Johannes* and *Ambrosius*, of whom *Numenius* (as he is quoted by *Eusebius*) (z) has given us this remarkable Account, viz. "That they were the *Scribes*, in religious Matters, among the *Egyptians*; that they flourish'd in *Egypt* at the Time, when the *Jews* were driven from thence; that they did not give place to any Body in the Science of *magical Secrets*; and, for this Reason, were chose unanimously by all *Egypt* to oppose *Museus* (so he calls *Moses*) a Leader of the *Jews*, and whose Prayers were very prevalent with God."

The several
Ways,
wherein the
Devil might
assist
them.

Now supposing that these, and whoever else accompany'd them, acted from the highest *Principles* in *Magick*; there are two Ways, wherein we may imagine it in the Power of the Devil to be assistant to such Persons, as pretend to work Miracles.

THE *first* is, by raising false *Images* and Appearances of Things; which may be done, either by affecting the *Brain*, or confusing the *optick Nerves*, or altering the *Medium*, which is between us and the Object. That he did some such Thing, as this, to our blessed Saviour, when, from the Top of an high Mountain, he pretended (a) to shew him all the *Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, in a Moment of Time*, is very plain from the *Convexity* of the Earth, which bounds the *Horizon*, and admits of no such unlimited Prospect; so that all he cou'd be presum'd capable of doing in this Case (as our Saviour was not insensible what

(y) 2 Tim. iii. 8.
(a) Matt. iv. 8.

(z) Præpar. Evang. l. 9. c. 8.

what he did do) was to make *fictitious Representations* of gay and magnificent Things in the Air.

SECONDLY, The other Way, wherein the Devil may be suppos'd able to assist these Magicians, is, by making use of the *Laws of Nature*, in producing Effects, which are not above the natural Power of Things, though they certainly exceed what Man can do. Thus, to transport a Body, with inconceivable Rapidity, from one Place to another ; to bring together different Productions of Nature, which *separately* have no visible Effect, but, when *united*, work Wonders ; to make Images move, walk, speak, and the like ; these may come within the Compass of the Devil's Power, because not transcending the *Laws of Nature*, though we cannot discern by what Means they are effected.

THIRDLY, There is a farther Supposition (*b*) of some learned Men, *viz.* that, under the divine Permission, wicked Spirits have a Power to work *real* Miracles, of which they perceive (*c*) some Intimations given us in Scripture, and, in the Nature of the Thing, no Reasons to the contrary ; and therefore the Question is, whether, what the Magicians here perform'd, were *real* Miracles, or not ?

SOME learned Writers have imagin'd, that there was not any real Transmutation, when the Rods of the *Egyptian* Magicians were pretended to be chang'd into Serpents, nor any real Miracle exhibited, when the Water was turn'd into Blood, and the Frogs produc'd ; but, that either the *Magicians* play'd their parts well, as dexterous Jugglers, or that they did it by their Knowledge of some secret Art ; or that some *Dæmons* assisted them, who, by their Power over the *Air*, enabled them to * deceive the Sight

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.



(*b*) *Stillingfleet's* Orig. Sacræ, p. 236. *Le Clerc's* Comment.

(*c*) Deut. xiii. 1. Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Theff. ii. 9.

* The *Mahometans*, in the Account they give us of these Transactions, seem to think them *Legerdemain* Tricks, rather than any *real* Miracles in the Magicians ; for they tell us, that *Moses* having wrought some Miracles before the King of *Egypt*, which not a little surpris'd him, he was advis'd by his Council to amuse him with fair Hopes, until he had sent for some of his most expert Sorcerers from *Thebais*. Accordingly *Sabour* and *Gadour*, two Brothers, renown'd for their *Magick Skill*, were sent for ; but, before they came to *Pharaoh's* Court, they went to consult the *Manes* of their Father about the

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Sight of the Beholders. It is to be observ'd however, that, in the Account, which *Moses* gives us of the Miracles perform'd by himself and *Aaron*, and of what the *Magicians* did by their *Inchantments*, he does not hint any Manner of Difference, as to the *Reality* of the Performances of either of them. In the Case of their Rods being turn'd into Serpents, he does not say, that they made them to *appear* to be such, by a Deception of the Sight, but that (d) *they flung down every Man his Rod, and they became Serpents*; and so, of the other two Miracles, which *Moses* exhibited, *that the Magicians did so with their Inchantments*. (e) Now, from the Knowledge of *natural Causes and Effects*, which, by the Help of *Experiment* and *Philosophy*, has, of late, been introduc'd, we may venture to say, that no Effects, like what these Men pretended to accomplish by *Inchantments*, can be produc'd by any, or all the *Powers of Nature*. No Art, no Study of *occult Sciences*, can enable a Man *really* to change a Rod into a living Serpent. There are no *Inchantments*, no Rules in *Sorcery* sufficient to make a living Frog, or to change Water into real Blood; and to suppose that the *Magicians* went about to impose upon *Pharaoh*, and the rest of the Spectators by mere *Artifice*, and Slight of Hand, was giving *Moses* and *Aaron* (whom we cannot but suppose *inquisitive* upon this Occasion) the fairest Opportunity imaginable

the Success of their Journey; acquainting him withal, that the two *Magicians*, which they were sent for to oppose, had a *Rod*, which they turn'd into a Serpent, and devour'd all that made head against it: To which their Father's Ghost answer'd, that, if that Rod turn'd itself into a Serpent, whilst they were asleep, they must never expect to prevail against them. However, this did not hinder them from appearing before *Pharaoh*, at the Head of his other *Magicians*, to the Number (as some say) of 70,000. All these had prepar'd their Rods, and Cords fill'd with *Quicksilver*, which being heated by the Sun, imitated the winding of a Serpent; but *Moses's* Serpent soon destroy'd them, to the great Surprise of all the Spectators: Whereupon *Sabour* and *Gadour* renounc'd their Profession, and embrac'd the Religion of *Moses*, which gave *Pharaoh* such a Disgust, that he had them both put to death, as holding secret Correspondence with *Moses*. *Herbelot's Biblioth. Orient.* p. 648, and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the Word *Jannes*.

(d) Exod. vii. 11, 12. (e) *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 9.

imaginable to detect the Cheat, and expose them to the Contempt, and Derision of the whole Company.

THEIR only Recourse, in this Case, can be to the Assistance of *Devils*, deluding the Company with false *Appearances* of Serpents, Frogs, and Blood: But let any one try to give a satisfactory Account, how any *Magician* cou'd, by his Power over the *Air*, either by himself, or by the Assistance of a *Dæmon*, represent to the naked View of Beholders, in Opposition to a *true* Miracle, Serpents, Frogs, and Water converted into Blood; nay, and so represent them, as that the *fictitious* Appearance shou'd not be distinguishable from the *real*, but shou'd bear to be seen with them, at one and the same Time, in the same Light, in the same View (for so the Magicians *Rods*, turn'd into *Serpents*, certainly were, when *Aaron's* Rod swallow'd them up): I say, let any one try to give a reasonable Account of this Fancy, and he will quickly see, that he may more reasonably suppose the Magicians able to perform a *true* and *real* Transmutation, than to ascribe to them such *imaginary* Powers, as this Supposition requires, and which, (if they cou'd be conceiv'd) can tend only to destroy the Certainty of all Appearances whatever.

IF then the Magicians cou'd have no Knowledge of any *mystic Arts*, or Powers of Nature, whereby to work Miracles; if they cou'd not deceive the Spectators by any *Slight of Hand*, nor obtain any Assistance from *evil Spirits*, sufficient to impose upon them by *false Appearances*; the Consequence seems to be, that the Miracles, which they wrought, were equally *true* with those which *Moses* and *Aaron* did. But then, as the *Magicians* had no Power inherent in themselves, they cou'd not tell, even when they set about imitating *Moses*, what the Success of their Attempt wou'd be. Their *Rods* were turn'd into Serpents, they saw, but how that was effected, they cou'd not tell. Had they had any certain Rules of Art or Science to work by, or any superior Help and Assistance to depend on, they wou'd, at once, have known what to attempt, and what not, and not have expos'd themselves to Scorn, by not being able to produce *Lice*, as well as *Frogs*. If what they did, was by the Agency of evil Spirits, it is plain, that that Agency was under the divine *Controul*, and cou'd go no farther, than the God of *Israel* permitted it; and the Reasons of his permitting it might be these:

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1571. &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Why Pharaoh ſent for his Magicians, and why God ſuffer'd them to work Wonders.

THE Learned in *Egypt* thought, that *Miracles*, *Prodigies*, and *Omens*, were given by the *planetary* and *elementary* Influences; and that Students, deeply vers'd in the *Mysteries* of Nature, cou'd cauſe them by *Art* and *Incantation*. *Pharaoh* might poſſibly be of this Opinion; and therefore, ſeeing *Moses* do very ſtrange Things, and knowing that his *Magicians* were great *Adepts* in theſe Sciences, he thought proper to ſend for them, in order to know, whether the Wonders, which *Moses* wrought, were the Effect of the Art of Man, of the Power of Nature, or of the Finger of God; for he ſeems to have argu'd thus, — If his *Magicians* cou'd perform what *Moses* did, *Moses* was ſuch an one as they, and endeavour'd to delude him with *artificial* Wonders, inſtead of real *Miracles*. Fit, therefore, it was, that theſe *Practitioners* ſhou'd be ſuffer'd to exert the utmoſt of their Power againſt *Moses*, in order to clear him from the Imputation of Magick, or Sorcery, which (conſidering the prevailing Notions of that Age) both *Hebrews* and *Egyptians* might have been apt to entertain, had not this Competition happen'd, and his *Antagoniſts* thereupon acknowledg'd the Superiority of the Principle, by which he acted, in Compariſon of which, all their Arts, and Knowledge of *occult Sciences* avail'd nothing.

THE *Iſraelites*, it muſt be own'd, were a People of a very ſuſpicious, diffident, and deſponding Temper. When *Moses* came to them with a Meſſage from God, at firſt they ſeem'd to receive him gladly, and to rejoice at their approaching Deliverance; and when he had ſhewn them the *Credentials*, which God appointed him to exhibit, it is ſaid, (f) that the People believed, and, when they heard that the Lord had looked upon their Affliction, they bowed their Heads, and worſhipped: But, within the Space of a Day or two, when they ſaw that every Thing did not answer their Expectation, but that their Petition to an imperious Tyrant was rejected with Scorn; how is their Tone chang'd to their very Deliverers, and the Blame of all their Grievances laid upon them! (g) The Lord look upon you, and judge, becauſe you have made our Saviour to be abhorred in the Eyes of Pharaoh, and in the Eyes of his Servants, to put a Sword into their Hands to ſlay us: And therefore, for the Confirmation of

of the Faith of these wavering and uncertain People, it was highly necessary, that this Contest between *Moses* and the *Magicians* shou'd be permitted, that the Disparity of Persons, acting by the Power of *God*, and by the Power of *Satan*, in such a Contraposition, might be more conspicuous.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

AND indeed, what cou'd more contribute to raise in the *Israelites* a Confidence in *God's* Promises, and a joyful Hope of a speedy Deliverance, than to see the great Disparity between the *Opposers* and *Maintainers* of their Cause? To see, I say, that tho', by the divine Permission, the *Magicians* cou'd change their Rods into Serpents, yet, as a manifest Token of Superiority, *Moses's* Rod devour'd all theirs; tho' they cou'd turn Water into *Blood*, yet it was above their Skill to restore it to its former Nature; though they made a Shift to produce *Frogs*, yet they were utterly unable to clear the *Egyptian* Palaces and Houses of them; though they did, in short, some Things, which only contributed to the Calamities of *Egypt*, yet they cou'd do no one Thing to redress them, nor even to relieve themselves against the Plague of the *Boils*? So true, and so severe withal, is that Observation of the Author of the *Book of Wisdom*: (b) *As for the Illusions of the Art Magick, they were put down, and their vaunting in Wisdom was reprov'd with Disgrace; for they, who promised to drive away Terrors, and Troubles from a sick Soul, were sick themselves of Fear, and worthy to be laugh'd at.*

BUT now *Moses* not only does such Miracles, as the *Magicians* never pretend to, (the Storm and Hail, the Thunder and Lightning, and thick Darknes, &c. they never once attempted to imitate) but, (supposing that *Pharaoh* might be addicted to *Astrologers*, who fancy'd that all Things here below might be govern'd by the Motion and Influence of the *Stars*) he very frequently gives him the Liberty to name the Time, when he wou'd have any Plague remov'd, that thereby he might know, that *God* alone was the Author of them, and that, consequently, there was no Day or Hour, under so ill an *Aspect*, but that he cou'd prevail with him, at whatever Moment he shou'd assign, to rescue and deliver him.

HAD *Moses* met with no Opposition in working his Miracles, *Pharaoh* had neither had so strong a Conviction,

(b) *Wisdom*, xvii. 7, 8.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

tion, nor cou'd *Moses* himself have exhibited so clear a Testimony of his divine Mission. (i) As the Nature of the *Egyptian* Learning then was, the King might have suspected that the *Prophet's* Miracles proceeded, if not from *natural* Means and *Incantments*, at least from the Influence of some *planetary* or *elementary* Powers: But when Men, of equal Skill and Abilities in all Points of *abstruse* Learning, were brought to contest the Matter with him, and acknowledg'd their Inability to proceed in a Conflict, where their Adversary had a divine Power apparently assisting him; this establish'd the Truth of *Moses's* Pretensions, though it made the other's *Obstinacy* and *Infidelity* inexcusable; and (k) a signal Instance of God's Wisdom it was, to permit these *Sorcerers* to proceed, for some Time, in their Contest with his Servant, which added Disgrace to the one's Defeat, as it did no small Glory to the other's Conquest.

THUS we have endeavour'd to satisfy the Objections, which are usually advanc'd against some Parts of the *Scripture History* compris'd in this *Period*; and, for the farther Satisfaction of our Reader, shall conclude with the Testimony of some Heathen Writers, who, in all Ages, have, more or less, taken Notice of the Birth, Life, and several Adventures of *Moses*, so far as we have hitherto advanc'd: (l) That his being taken out of the River *Nile*, for Instance, is sung by the Author of the *Orphick* Verses, under the Title *ὑδολέννης*, or *born of the Water*: That the Beauty and Gracefulness of his Person, which recommended him to every one's Affection, is remember'd by *Justin* (m) out of *Trogus Pompeius*, and that (n) the whole Fable of *Venus* falling in Love with *Adonis*, in all Probability, arose from the Story of *Moses* and *Pharaoh's* Daughter: That the Wonder of the *Burning Bush* is recorded by *Antiphanus*, with a small Variation, as he is cited (o) by *Eusebius*: That several of the *Plagues* upon *Egypt* are mention'd in the Fragments of *Eupolemus*, preserv'd (p) by the same *Eusebius*; and that the Slaughter of their *First-born*, in particular, is commemorated in that mournful Feast of *Osiris*, wherein they rise at Midnight, light Candles, and go

(i) *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. l. 9. (k) *Stillingfleet's* Origin. Sacrae. (l) *Eusebius's* Præp. Evang. l. 13. c. 12. (m) Lib. 36. c. 2. (n) *Huetius's* Dem. Evang. Prop. 4. c. 3. (o) *Eusebius's* Præp. Evang. l. 9. c. 22. (p) Ibid.

go about weeping and groaning : That *Moses's* calling the A. M. 2433, &c. God of Heaven *Jao*, or *Jehovah*, is mention'd (q) by *Diodorus Siculus* : That the Names of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, Ant. Chris. 1571, &c. and the Opposition they made against him, is preserv'd (r) From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii. in *Eumenius*, (s) *Pliny*, and (t) *Apuleius* ; and (to go no farther) that the *Israelites* Departure out of *Egypt*, and settling in the Land of *Canaan*, is (u) by *Tacitus*, who took it from some *Egyptian* Authors, thus related. " The *Hebrews* were descended from the *Affyrians*, and, possessing a great Part of *Egypt*, led the Life of Shepherds ; but afterwards being burthen'd with hard Labour, they came out of *Egypt* under the Command of *Moses*, with some *Egyptians* accompanying them, and went through the Country of the *Arabians*, into *Palestine Syria*, and there set up Rites contrary to those of the *Egyptians*." So fully does the Testimony of *Aliens* tend to the Confirmation of thy *Revelations*, O God !

DISSERTATION V.

Of the sacred Chronology, and prophane History, Learning, Religion, Idolatry, and monumental Works, &c. but chiefly of the Egyptians, during this Period.

BEFORE we enter upon the *historical* Matters which Chronological Differences settled. are contain'd in this *Period*, between God's Call to *Abraham* out of *Mesopotamia*, and the Children of *Israel's* Departure out of *Egypt*, it may not be improper to settle its *Chronology*, and to take Notice of some *Exceptions*, that may possibly be made to it.

THE Difference, between the *Hebrew*, *Samaritan*, and *Septuagint* Computations, in the former periods of Time, ran wide ; and it was some Part of our Care, either to determine which was most probably in the right, or to reconcile the seeming *Opposition* between them : But in *this*, the *Variation* is so small, that they seem almost unanimously to agree, that, (x) from the Promise made to *Abraham*, to his Posterity's *Exodus* out of *Egypt*, are 430 Years, which (according to the learned *Usher*) may very properly be divided into two *Halves*.

I. (y) FROM the Time of the Promise, when *Abraham* was in the 75th Year of his Age, to the Birth of *Isaac*,
Y 2 are

- (q) Lib. 1. (r) *Eusebius*, l. 8. c. 8. (s) Lib. 30. c. 1.
(t) Apolog. 2. (u) Lib. 5. (x) Exod. xii. 40. (y) Gen.
xii. 4.—xxi. 5.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

are 25 Years; (z) from the Birth of *Isaac*, to the Birth of *Jacob*, 60 Years; from the Birth of *Jacob* to his Descent into *Egypt*, with his whole Family, 130 Years; so that the whole of this Division amounts to 215 Years.

2. THE other Part of the *Division* is thus reckon'd up. *Joseph*, the Son of *Jacob*, was 30 Years old, when he expounded *Pharaoh's* Dreams: The seven Years of *Plenty* were run out, and (a) the third Year of *Famine* begun, when his Father came down into *Egypt*: So that, by this Time, *Joseph* was 39. Now 39 Years taken from the 110, which *Joseph* liv'd, will make the Time, which the *Israelites* had continu'd in *Egypt*, before *Joseph's* Death, to be 71: And, as (b) from the Death of *Joseph*, to the Birth of *Moses*, are precisely 64 Years; so, (c) from his Birth, to the Time of the *Israelites* Departure, are 80 Years. The several Articles of this Division therefore, being put together, amount, in like Manner, to 215 Years; and the two gross Sums make exactly 430.

THE History indeed tells us, that (d) the Sojourn of the Children of *Israel*, who dwelt in *Egypt*, was Four hundred and thirty Years; but it does not therefore follow, that they dwelt in *Egypt* all that Time. They came into *Egypt* with *Jacob*, A. M. 2298, and went out of *Egypt*, A. M. 2513; so that they liv'd in it just two hundred and fifteen Years. Their Sojourn therefore must not be limited to their living in *Egypt*, but be taken in a more general Sense, and extended equally to the Time of their living in *Canaan*, which being added to the Time of their Continuance in *Egypt*, makes exactly the Number of Four hundred and thirty Years.

THAT this is the Sense of the divine Historian is manifest from the Authority of the Samaritan Text, which has the whole Verse thus: *Now the inhabiting of the Children of Israel, and their Fathers whereby they inhabited in the Land of Canaan, and in the Land of Egypt, were Four hundred and thirty Years*, whereupon the learned Dr. *Prideaux* (e) has this Observation, "That the Additions
" herein do manifestly mend the Text; they make it
" more clear and intelligible, and add nothing to the He-
" brew Copy, but what must be understood by the Rea-
" der to make out its Sense:" And upon this Presumption
it

(z) Gen. xxv. 26. (a) Gen. xlvii. 4. (b) Compare Gen. xli. 46. with xlv. 6. (c) Exod. vii. 7. (d) Exod. xii. 40. (e) Connection, Vol. II, Part i. l. 6. p. 600.

it may very reasonably be suppos'd, (f) that the antient Hebrew Text was, in this Verse, the same with the present Samaritan, and that the Words, which the Samaritan has, in this Place, more than the Hebrew, have been dropp'd by the Negligence of some Transcribers.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

AGAIN, in the Promise, which God makes to Abraham, he tells him, (g) *that his Seed shou'd be a Stranger in a Land, which was not theirs; that there they should serve the Inhabitants, and they afflict them for Four hundred Years; but that, in the fourth Generation, they should return to Canaan again; whereas Four hundred Years are not the Number specified in the Place just now examin'd, nor are four Generations equivalent to the Space of Time, wherein the Hebrews sojourn'd in strange Countries. It is to be observ'd however, that, both in sacred and prophane Authors, a common Thing it is, to mention only the large Sum, and drop the less, especially when (to preserve the Exactness of Chronology) the precise Number is, in other Places, inserted: And that tho' a Generation does usually denote a Term of an hundred Years; yet taking the Words to relate to the whole Sojourning of the Hebrews, from their going into Canaan, to their going out of Egypt, the odd Number of 30 Years may here be suppos'd to be omitted, to make it a round Sum, as well as in the former Sense: But then taking a Generation to mean no more than one Descent, the Matter of Fact is, that from the Israelites going down into Egypt, until the Time of their leaving it, in some of the Sons of Jacob (particularly in Levi, who begat Cohath, and Cohath, Amram, and Amram, Moses, who conducted the People out of Egypt) there were no more than four Descents.*

WHETHER therefore we take the Word *Generation* to denote an *Age of Years*, or a *Succession of Lives*, there is plainly no Incongruity in the Expression; because (bating the odd Number of *Thirty*) Abraham, and his Posterity, sojourn'd in a *strange Land* for the Space of Four hundred Years; and yet (allowing it to be meant of a *Descent of Lives*) at the *Israelites Return* towards *Canaan*, from the Time of their going down into *Egypt*, several Persons of the *fourth Generation* were not extinct.

EGYPT indeed was the most considerable Nation, with whom the *Israelites* had any Intercourse during this

The Egyptian History.

Y 3

Period:

(f) Shuckford's Connection, Vol. II. l. 9. (g) Gen. xv. 13, 16.

A. M. 2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xliii.

Period: What Dealings they had with the ſeveral Parts of *Canaan*, will beſt be related when we come to treat of the Hiſtory of that Country. In the mean Time, we cannot but lament our Want of the antient Records of thoſe Times, which forces us, inſtead of a continu'd Hiſtory, to preſent our Reader with Nothing, but a jejune *Catalogue* of the Succeſſion of the *Egyptian* Kings, which, as far as they relate to our preſent Purpoſe, we have thought proper * to ſubjoin at the Bottom of the Page; and ſhall only take

* In the Year of the World 1849, reign'd in *Thebais*, or the *Upper Egypt*, *Menes* (whom the Scripture calls *Mizraim*) 62 Years: In the Year 1911, *Atthothes*, 59 Years: In the Year 1970, *Atthothes* II, 32 Years: In the Year 2002, *Diabies*, 19 Years: In the Year 2021, *Pempbos*, 18 Years: In the Year 2039, *Tegar Amachus*, 79 Years: In the Year 2118, *Stoechus*, 6 Years: In the Year 2124, *Gofermies*, 30 Years: In the Year 2154, *Mares*, 26 Years.

In the Time of theſe, flouriſh'd the *Royal Shepherds* in the *Lower Egypt*; and, in the Year of the World 1920, *Salatis*, the firſt paſtoral King, reign'd 19 Years: In the Year 1939, *Beon*, the ſecond paſtoral King, 44 Years: In the Year 1983, *Apachnas*, the third paſtoral King, 36 Years: In the Year 2020, *Apophis*, the fourth paſtoral King, 61 Years: In the Year 2081, *Jamias*, the fifth paſtoral King, 50 Years and one Month; and after theſe *Herules Aſſis*, 49 Years, and two Months.

Then follow the *Theban* Kings, in this Order: In the Year of the World 2180, *Anoyphes* (who, by Archbiſhop *Uſſer*, is nam'd *Tethmoſis*, and is ſaid to have expell'd the *Royal Shepherds*) reign'd 20 Years: In the Year 2200, *Siricius*, 18 Years: In the Year 2218, *Cncubus Cneurus*, 27 Years: In the Year 2245, *Ravofis*, 13 Years: In the Year 2258, *Biyris*, 10 Years: In the Year 2268, *Saophis*, 29 Years: In the Year 2297, *Senſaophis*, 27 Years: In the Year 2324, *Moſcheris*, 31 Years: In the Year 2355, *Maſthis*, 33 Years: In the Year 2388, *Pamnus Archadnes* (whom *Uſſer* calls *Ratholis*) 35 Years; and in the Year 2423, *Apaxus Maximus*, 100 Years.

After the Expulſion of the Race of the *Royal Paſtors*, in the Year of the World 2205, *Chebron* ſucceeded to the Kingdom of the *Lower Egypt*, and reign'd 13 Years: In the Year 2218, *Amenophis*, 20 Years, and 7 Months: In the Year 2239, *Amefes*, 21 Years, and 9 Months: In the Year 2261, *Mephres*, 12 Years, and 9 Months: In the Year 2273, *Miſphragmuthoſis*, 25 Years, and 10 Months: In the Year 2299, *Thmoſis*, 9 Years, and 8 Months: In the Year 2309, *Amenophis* II, 30 Years, and 10 Months: In the Year 2340, *Orus*, 36 Years, and 5 Months: In

take Notice here in particular, that A. M. 2084, when A. M. *Abraham*, and his Nephew *Lot*, went down into *Egypt*,^{2433, &c.} *Tegar Amachus* was then upon the Throne; that A. M.^{Ant. Chrif. 1571, &c.} 2260, when *Joseph* was born, *Biyris* was King, and when *he* was sold into *Egypt*, about 17 Years after, *Saophis* had ^{From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.} succeeded; that this *Saophis* was the Prince whose Dreams he expounded, and by whom he was promoted to great Honour in the Kingdom; that he dy'd however before his Dreams were accomplish'd, for it was A. M. 2298, that the first Year of the Famine began, when *Sensaophis*, (who was probably his Son, and held *Joseph* in equal Favour) sway'd the Sceptre; that this was the Prince, to whom *Jacob* and his Sons, upon their coming down into *Egypt*, in the third Year of the Famine, were presented, and with whom *Israel* had the Conversation above-mention'd; that A. M. 2369, when *Joseph* dy'd, *Masthis* was King, by whom, and some of his Successors, the *Israelites* were well treated, in Remembrance of the Services, he had done the Publick, until there happen'd a Revolution in the Government, which some chuse to place about this Time; that A. M. 2427, the *Israelites* began to be oppress'd, and severely treated by *Rameffes Miamun*, in whose Reign *Moses* was born, slew the *Egyptian*, and fled into *Midian*; that A. M. 2493, *Amenophis* succeeded his Father in his Kingdom, and in his Cruelty to the *Israelites*; but that being compell'd, at last, by the mighty Hand of God, to let them go, he, and all his Army, in endeavouring to retake them, were, A. M. 2513, swallow'd up in the *Red-Sea*.

SALATIS, and his Successors, not only oppress'd the *Israelites*, as we said before, but, by the Violence of their Conquests, so terrify'd the antient Inhabitants of the Land, that many Persons of the first Figure thought it better to leave their native Country, than to endeavour to fit down under such Calamities, as they saw were coming upon them. *Cecrops*, about this Time, departed from *Egypt*; and, after some Years Travel in other Places, came,

Y 4

at

In the Year 2376, *Acenbres*, 12 Years, and 1 Month: In the Year 2388, *Ratbotis*, nine Years: In the Year 2397, *Acencheres*, twelve Years, and five Months: In the Year 2410, *Acencheres* II, 12 Years, and 3 Months: In the Year 2422, *Acmais*, 4 Years, and 1 Month: In the Year 2426, *Rameffes*, 1 Year, and 3 Months: In the Year 2427, *Rameffes Miamun*, 66 Years, and 2 Months: And in the Year 2493, *Amenophis* III, 19 Years, and 6 Months, who is the last we meet with in this Period.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

at length, to *Greece*, and liv'd in *Attica*, where he was kindly receiv'd by *Attæus*, the King of the Country; marry'd his Daughter; and, upon his Demise, succeeded to his Throne; and thereupon he taught the People (who were *vagrant* before) the Use of settled Habitations; restrain'd all licentious Lust among them; oblig'd each Man to marry one Wife; and, in short, gave wise Rules for the Conduct of their Lives, and the Exercise of all *civil* and *religious* Offices. About thirty Years after the Death of *Cecrops*, *Cadmus* * came, either directly from *Egypt* (as some think,) or rather from *Phœnicia* (as others will have it) and, with several People, that follow'd his Fortune, († of which some

* The true Account of *Cadmus* is, ——— That his Father, whose Name is unknown, was an *Egyptian*, who left *Egypt* about the Time, that *Cecrops* came from thence, and obtain'd a Kingdom in *Phœnicia*, as *Cecrops* did in *Attica*; and, that his two Sons, *Phœnix* and *Cadmus*, were born after his Settlement in that Country: And hence it came to pass, that *Cadmus*, having had an *Egyptian* Father, was brought up in the Religion, and was well acquainted with the History of that Country, which occasion'd several Writers of his Life to account him an *Egyptian*; and, at the same Time, being born and educated in *Phœnicia*, he became Master of the Language and Letters of the Country, and had likewise a *Phœnician* Name, which has induc'd several others, that have wrote of him, to conclude, with good Reason, that he was a Native of that Country. *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol II. l. 8.

† The Account which *Ovid* (in his *Metamorphoses*, lib. iii. fab. i.) gives us of this Matter, is, ——— That *Cadmus's* Followers were all devour'd by a *Serpent*, which when *Cadmus* had kill'd, and sown its Teeth in the Ground, there sprang up from them a Number of armed Men, who, as soon as they appear'd above Ground, fell a fighting one another, and were all kill'd, exceptive, who, surviving the Conflict, went with *Cadmus*, and help'd him to build *Thebes*. And the *Mythologick* Sense of all this Story, according to the Conjecture of a learned Author, is no more than this ——— That when *Cadmus* came into *Bœotia*, and had conquer'd the Inhabitants of it, it might be recorded of him in the *Phœnician*, or *Hebrew* Language (which antiently was the same) that he *Nashab Chail Chameish Anoshim, Noshekin be Shenei Nachash*; but now there being several Ambiguities in these Words, where the Vowels were not originally written, (*Chameish*, for Instance, may signify *five*, as well as *warlike*; *Shenei*, Teeth, as well as *Spears*; and *Nachash*, a *Serpent*, as well as *Brass*) a fabulous Translator might say, *he*
rais'd

some Authors give us a *strange Account*) having expell'd the antient Inhabitants, settled himself in *Bæotia*, and built *Thebes*. A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

DANAUS was another conſiderable Perſon, who, about this Time, left *Egypt*, and came into *Greece*. He was originally deſcended from a *Grecian* Anceſtor, and, being now at *Argos*, when the Crown was vacant, he ſtood *Candidate* for it againſt *Galenor*, the Son of *Sthenelus*, and, † by the Superſtition of the People, who were his Electors, carry'd it. But, of all the *Refugees*, who quitted *Egypt* much about this Time, *Belus*, the Son of *Neptune*, ſeems to be the moſt famous. He, with ſome *Egyptian* Priests, went to *Babylon*, and there obtain'd Leave to ſettle, and cultivate their Studies, in the ſame Manner, and with the ſame Encouragement, that had been granted them in their own Country.

THE chief Aim of the antient *Aſtronomers* ſeems to have been, to obſerve the Times of the Riſing and Setting of the Stars; and the firſt and moſt proper Places, that they cou'd think of for that Purpoſe, were very large and open Plains, where they cou'd have an extenſive View of the Horizon, without Interruption; and ſuch Plains, as theſe, were the *Obſervatories* for many Generations. But the *Egyptians* had,

rais'd a Force of five Men, arm'd from the Teeth of a Serpent. Whereas the Words ſhou'd be render'd, *he rais'd a warlike Force of Men, arm'd with Spears of Braſs*; and it is no Wonder that the *Greeks*, who were ſo fond of diſguiſing all their antient Accounts with *Fable* and *Allegory*, ſhou'd give the Hiſtory of *Cadmus* this Turn, when the Words, in which his Actions are recorded, gave them ſo fair an Opportunity. *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 8.

† The Diſpute between *Cadmus* and *Galenor*, concerning their Titles to the Crown, was argu'd, on both Sides, for a whole Day; and when *Galenor* was thought to have offer'd as weighty and ſtrong Arguments for his Pretenſions, as *Danaus* cou'd for his, the next Day was appointed for the further hearing, and determining their Claims, when an Accident put an End to the Diſpute. For, not far from the Place, where the People were aſſembled, there happen'd a Fight between a *Wolf* and a *Bull*, wherein the *Wolf* got the better. This was thought a Thing not a little *ominous*; and therefore, as the *Wolf* was a Creature they were leſs acquainted with, than the *Bull*, they thought it was the Will of the Gods, declar'd by the Event of this accidental Combat, that he, who was the *Stranger*, ſhou'd rule over them. *Shuckford's Connection*, Vol. II. l. 8.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

had, for above three hundred Years before the Time of this *Belus*, invented a Method to improve their Views by the Building of Pyramids, from the Top of which they might take a Prospect with greater Advantage; and therefore it is no improbable Conjecture, that *Belus* taught the *Babylonians* the Use of such Structures, and might possibly project for them that lofty Tower, which was afterwards call'd by his Name.

FOR this Tower seems to have been an Improvement of the *Egyptian* Pyramids. It was rais'd to a much greater Height; had a more commodious Space at Top; more useful and large Apartments within; and yet was a less bulky Building, and rais'd upon a narrower Foundation: So that the Contriver of this seems to have been well acquainted with the *Egyptian Pyramid*, and its Defects, and to have herein design'd a Structure much more excellent, which can be ascrib'd to none, with so great a Shew of Probability, as to the *Belus*, we are now speaking of.

The Learning of the Egyptians.

THAT the *Egyptians*, in the early Ages of the World, were very famous for Wisdom and Learning, is evident from many antient Writers, as well as the Testimony of the Scriptures themselves; for when, among other Things, to the Honour of *Moses*, it is said, that *(b) he was learned in all the Wisdom of the Egyptians*; and, to magnify the Knowledge of *Solomon*, we are told, that *(i) he excelled all the Wisdom of Egypt*; we cannot but infer, that this Nation, above all others, had gain'd a Reputation, even for the Invention of several useful Sciences.

Their Astronomy and Geometry.

THE Tillage of the Ground made the Study of *Astronomy* absolutely necessary, in order to their knowing, from the *Lights of Heaven*, the Times and Seasons for the several Parts of *Agriculture*; and the Nature of their Country, overflow'd every Year by the *Nile*, and every Year losing its Land-Marks, made it of continual Use to them to study *Geometry*; and (as a necessary *Handmaid* to that) to make themselves expert in *Arithmetick*.

It is not to be suppos'd however, that, hitherto, they had carry'd the Study either of *Astronomy* or *Geography* to any great Height. They observ'd the *Places* of the Stars, and the *periodical* Motions of the *Planets*. They kept *Registers* of their Observations for a long Course, and took Account of the Weather and Seasons, that follow'd their several Observations. They recorded the Times of sowing and reaping this

(b) Acts vii. 22.

(i) 1 Kings iv. 30.

this or that Grain, and, by their long Experience, became ^{A. M.} able *Prognosticators* of the Weather, and the Seasons, and ^{2433, &c.} excellent Directors for the Tillage of the Ground: And, in ^{Ant. Chriſ.} like Manner, by their Knowledge in *Geometry*, they con- ^{1571, &c.} triv'd very proper Methods of marking out, and describing ^{From Exod.} the ſeveral Parts of their Country, and were very careful, no ^{i. to Chap.} doubt, in making *Draughts* of the *Flow* and *Ebb* of their River *Nile* every Year; but when it is conſider'd, that the *Egyptians* did not as yet apprehend, that the Year conſiſted of more than 360 Days; and that * both *Thales* and *Pythagoras*, many Ages after theſe Times, made great Improvements in *Geometry* beyond what they had learn'd in *Egypt*; that *Thales* was the firſt, who ventur'd to foretel an *Eclipse*; and *Eudoxius* and *Ptolemy*, to reduce the heavenly Motions into *Tables*; we can hardly think, that either *Aſtronomy* or *Geometry* were, as yet, carry'd to any great Perfection.

THE Science of *Phyſick* is generally imputed to *Æſcula-Phyſick.* *pius*, which Name was given to *Sethorthrus* (a King of *Memphis*, who ſtands ſecond in the third *Dynasty* of *Manetho*) for his great Skill in that Art: And, tho' no great Credit is to be given to † their boaſted Proficiency in *Chymistry*,

* *Thales*, who travell'd into *Egypt* for the Sake of their Learning, after his Return home, ſacrific'd an Ox to the Gods, for Joy, that he had hit on the Method of inſcribing a *rectangle Triangle*, within a Circle; and *Pythagoras*, no leſs than a whole *Hecatomb*, for his finding out the Proportion of the longeſt Side of a *Right-angled Triangle* to the other two, which is no more than a common Propoſition of the firſt Book of *Euclid*; and yet theſe two Philoſophers cou'd not have the Invention of theſe Things from the *Egyptians*, unleſs we ſuppoſe, either that the *Egyptians* did not teach them all that they knew, or that the Diſciples conceal'd the Thing, and vainly arrogated to themſelves what, in ſtrict Truth, they had borrow'd from their Maſters. *Diog. Laert. in Pythag. & Thalete.*

† Some modern Aſſertors of the great Antiquity of *Chymistry* tell us of a Medicine us'd only by the *Egyptian* Priests, and kept ſecret, even from moſt of the *Natives*, that is of Efficacy almoſt to do any Thing, but reſtore the Dead to Life again. This, ſay they, was the grand *Elixir*, or chymical Preparation, made with the *Philoſophers Stone*, the Invention of *Hermes*; by the Help of which, the *Egyptian* Kings were enabled to build the *Pyramids*, with the Treasures, which their *Furnaces* afforded them: But theſe Fables are ſufficiently confuted by the profound Silence of all Antiquity in this Matter. They are indeed built

A. M.
2435, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Magick.

miftry, yet it is reasonable to believe, from their constant Practice of *Diffectiōs*, that they cou'd not well fail of a competent Knowledge in *Anatomy*,

THE Science however, for which they were moſt famous, and for which indeed they valu'd themſelves moſt, was *Magick*, though the whole Structure of it had no other Foundation, than a ſuperſtitious Belief of the great Influence, which *heavenly Bodies* are ſuppos'd to have upon this *inferior World*. To this Purpoſe they imagin'd, that the ſeven *Planets* govern'd the ſeven *Days* of the *Week*; and pretended, that, by a long Obſervation of the Motion of the celeftial Bodies, they had obtain'd the Art of foreſeeing future Events. They believ'd, in ſhort, that the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Elements, were endu'd with *Intelligence*, and appointed by the ſupreme Deity to govern the *World*; and, though they acknowledg'd that God might, upon extraordinary Occaſions, work Miracles, reveal his Will by audible Voices, Viſions, Dreams, Prophecies, &c. yet they imagin'd alſo, that, generally ſpeaking, Prodigies were cauſ'd, Oracles given, and Viſions occaſion'd in a *natural Way*, by the Obſervation, or Influence of the Courſes of the *Heavenly Bodies*, or by the Operations of the *Powers* of Nature; and therefore they conceiv'd, that their learned *Profeſſors* cou'd work Miracles, obtain Omens, and interpret Dreams, merely by their Skill in natural Knowledge, which, tho' ſtrange and unaccountable to the *Vulgar*, was very obvious to Perſons of Science and Philoſophy.

IN later Ages indeed, and when the *Egyptians* began to worſhip their departed Princes, a Notion prevail'd that *Spirits* or *Dæmons*, of a Nature prior to Men, were employ'd in the Government of the *World*, and had their ſeveral Provinces appointed them by God. To this Honour they imagin'd that the Souls of departed *Heroes*, and extraordinary Perſons, were admitted; and, for this Reaſon, they ſuppos'd, that they were not only endow'd with Powers far exceeding

built upon ſuſpicious Authorities, uncertain Conjectures, and *allegorical* Interpretations of the fabulous Stories of the *Greeks*, which theſe Men will have to be *chymical* Secrets in Diſguiſe; inſomuch that they fancy, that the *Golden Fleece*, which *Jaſon* fetch'd from *Colchis*, was only a Receipt to make the *Philophers-Stone*; and that *Medea* reſtor'd *Æſon's* Father to his Youth again, by the *Grand Elixir*. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. i. c. 3. and *Wotton's* Reflections on antient and modern Learning, c. 9.

exceeding those of mortal Men, but had likewise Miracles, Visions, Oracles, and Omens, submitted to their Ministry and Direction; and, consequently, in all their Demands or Exigencies of this Kind, made them the Objects of their *Incantations and Prayers.*

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

THESE were some of the chief Arts and Sciences (for their Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, and Mechanicks of all Kinds, for which they were so justly famous, we have but just Room to mention) that flourish'd, at this Time, among the *Egyptians*: And we come now to observe a little, by what *Means* it was, that this Learning of theirs came to be preserv'd, and transmitted to Posterity.

THE *Egyptian* Language was certainly one of the most antient in the World: For, considering its *Structure* and *Constitution*, (* wherein it widely differs from all *Oriental* and *European* Languages) it must needs be an *Original*, or Mother-Tongue, form'd at the Confusion of *Babel*. Their most antient Way of Writing was by *Hieroglyphical* Figures * of various Animals, and Plants, the Parts of human

How they
preserv'd
their Learn-
ing.

* For the *Copts* neither decline their *Nouns*, nor conjugate their *Verbs* (not even those of foreign Extract) otherwise than by prefixing *Particles*, sometimes of one or more Syllables, and sometimes of a single Letter, which denote *Case*, *Gender*, *Number*, and *Person*, several of which are often joined together in one Word, and the *primitive* Word usually placed last: So that the Difficulty of this Language consists in the incredible Combination of the Words and Particles, in the Change of the Vowels, in transposing the middle Part of the Word, and adding superfluous Letters, which it requires no small Labour and Skill to distinguish. *Wilkins's Dissert. de Linguâ Copticâ*, p. 120.

* Of these there were three Kinds among the *Egyptians*, which seem to have more or less Art in them, according to the Period of their Invention. The 1st was, *To make the principal Circumstance of the Subject stand for the whole*. Thus, when they wou'd describe a *Battle*, or *two Armies in Array*, they painted two *Hands*, one holding a *Shield*, and the other a *Bow*: When a *Tumult*, or *popular Insurrection* — an armed Man casting *Arrows*, &c. When a *Siege* — a scaling *Ladder*. The 2d was, *To put the Instrument of the Thing (whether real, or metaphorical) for the Thing itself*. Thus an *Eye*, eminently plac'd, was design'd to represent God's *Omniſcience*: An *Eye* and *Sceptre* — a *Monarch*; and a *Ship* and *Pilot* — the *Governor of the Universe*. The 3d was, *To make one Thing represent another, where there was perceiv'd any quaint Analogy, or Similitude,*

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

human Bodies, and *mechanical* Instruments, for in theſe Things did the *Hieroglyphics* both of the *Ethiopians* and *Egyptians* (whereof *Hermes* is ſaid to have been the Inventor) moſt certainly conſiſt: But, beſides theſe, they made uſe likewiſe of *literal* Characters, whereof they had two Kinds, calling the one the *ſacred Letters*, in which their publick Registers, and all Matters of an higher Nature were written; and the other, the *Vulgar*, which every one made uſe of in their common Buſineſs. But both theſe Characters are at preſent loſt, unleſs they remain in ſome old *Inſcriptions*, that are unintelligible, and cannot be decypher'd.

NOT only the *Egyptians*, but ſeveral other Nations us'd to preſerve the Memory of Things by *Inſcriptions* on Pillars. The *Columns of Hermes*, upon which he is ſaid to have wrote all his Learning, are mention'd by ſeveral Writers of good Note; and from them, both the *Grecian Philoſophers*,

militude, between the Representative and the Thing properly intended. Thus, the *Univerſe* was deſign'd by a *Serpent in a Circle*, whoſe variegated Spots ſignify'd the *Stars*; and the *riſing of the Sun*, by the *two Eyes of a Crocodile*, becauſe they ſeem to emerge from his Head; a *tyrannical King*, was repreſented by an *Eagle*; and a cruel, or *improvident Parent*, by an *Hawk*. Thus, from the Nature of the Things themſelves, or their Reſemblance to ſomething elſe, from the principal Circumſtance of any Action, or the chief Inſtrument employ'd in doing it, *Hieroglyphics* at firſt ſeem to have been invented. But whether their Invention was *prior* to that of *Letters*, has been Matter of ſome Debate among the Learned; tho' one can hardly forbear thinking, that a Picture Character (as *Hieroglyphics* are) wou'd ſcarce be intelligible, unleſs Men cou'd be ſuppos'd to delineate the Forms and Pictures of Things more accurately, than can well be imagin'd: But even if that were granted, they wou'd at beſt have been but a very imperfect Character, ſince they cou'd only hit off the Idea of Things *viſible*, and muſt therefore be defective in a Multitude of Signs, to expreſs the full Meaning of a Man's Mind: For which Reaſon ſome have ſuppos'd, that even the *Egyptians* themſelves were wont to intermingle Letters with *Hieroglyphics*, to fill up and connect Sentences, and to expreſs Actions more fully, than Pictures were found to do. Theſe *Hieroglyphics* were at firſt in common Uſe, but, in Proceſs of Time, were appropriated to ſacred and religious Matters, and wrote and underſtood by the Priests only. Warburton's Divine Legation, Lib. iv. and Shuckford's Connection, Lib. viii.

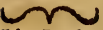
losophers, and *Egyptian* Historians are suppos'd to have taken many valuable Hints: But to these Inscriptions succeeded the *sacred Books*, which contain'd not only what related to the Worship of the Gods, and the Laws of the Kingdom; but *historical* Collections likewise, yea, and all Kinds of *miscellaneous* and *philosophical* Matters of any Moment, which the Priests, or *sacred Scribes* were oblig'd to insert in these publick *Registers*, in order to be transmitted to Posterity.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

A NATION, so renown'd for their Knowledge and Learning, and who had such certain Methods of preserving the Traditions of their Ancestors, might have kept the *original* Religion, one wou'd think, with more than ordinary Purity; at least, wou'd not have run into the same Excess of Idolatry and *Polytheism*, that other People, at this Time, were so strangely addicted to: And yet, if we look a little into their History, we shall soon find more Corruption of this Kind among them, than in any other Nation. Some of their wiser Sort, indeed, are said to have acknowledg'd one *supreme* God, the Maker and Ruler of the World, whom they sometimes call'd by the Name of *Osiris*, or *Serapis*; sometimes by that of *Isis*; and, at other Times, by that of *Neith*, on whose Temple at *Sais* was the following remarkable Inscription, *I am all that has been, is, or shall be, and my Vail hath no Mortal yet uncover'd*. But tho' some Parts of *Egypt* might, at first, be free from all idolatrous Worship; yet, when the Humour once began to spread, it soon over-ran the whole Kingdom. The heavenly *Luminaries* were the first Objects of profane Adoration; and, in *Egypt*, the Sun and the Moon went under the Denomination of *Osiris* and *Isis*. After these, the Elements, and other Parts of Nature (such as *Vulcan*, meaning thereby the *Fire*; *Ceres*, the *Earth*; *Oceanus*, the *Water*; and *Minerva*, the *Air*;) were admitted into the Number of their *Deities*.

BUT, besides the *celestial*, they had *terrestrial* Gods likewise; for most of their Princes, who had merited well of the People, were, after their Death, *canoniz'd*, and invoked under the Names of *Sol*, *Saturnus*, *Rhea*, *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Vulcanus*, *Vesta*, and *Mercurius*, which, according to *Diodorus*, were the eight first Hero-Gods, which the *Egyptians* worshipp'd. Nay (and what is scarce credible) they came at last to give divine Honours to several Animals, and that with so great a Variety, and Disagreement among themselves, that, except some of the principal *Deities*,
which

A. M. which were honour'd all the Kingdom over, there was, al-
 2433, &c. most in every Town or Village, a different God, held in
 Ant. Chris. Veneration in one Place, and detested in the next, which
 1571, &c. often occasion'd bitter Animosities, and sometimes invete-
 From Exod. rate Quarrels, and dangerous Wars.
 i. to Chap. xiii.

 Now the Reason, why the *Egyptians* adopted such a Va-
The Reasons riety of Animals into the Number of their Gods, was not
 given for it. so much from any Consideration of their *Subserviency* to hu-
 man Life, as from a certain Similitude, they perceiv'd be-
 tween them, and the Deity to whom they were devoted.
 Thus the *Hawk* was made sacred to *Osiris*, as an Emblem
 of the supreme Deity, by Reason of its piercing Sight and
 Swiftnes; the *Crocodile* and *Sea-horse*, were sacred to *Ty-
 pho*; *Anubis* was said to be the Dog-star, and the Dog was
 sacred to him; the *Serpent* or *Dragon* was consecrated to
Nephthe; and other suitable Animals, to their respective
 Gods: Nor is the Conjecture * of our learned Country-
 man (a) at all to be rejected, viz. That the Use of the
hieroglyphical

* This Conjecture the learned Author of *the Divine Lega-
 tion of Moses* abundantly confirms: For, having enumerated
 the several Things, that might give Occasion to *Brute-Worship*
 among the *Egyptians*; such as, 1. A grateful Sense of the Be-
 nefits receiv'd from Animals: 2. The considering these Ani-
 mals as *Symbols* of the Divine Nature: 3. The Notion of God's
 pervading, and being present in 'all Things: 4. The *Egyptian*
 Use of *Asterisms*, or denoting Constellations by the Name of
 Animals: 5. The Doctrine of *Metempsychosis*, or human Souls
 transmigrating into the Bodies of Animals: And 6. The In-
 vention of some *Egyptian* King or other, for his private Ends
 of Policy. All these Causes or Occasions, I say, our Author
 having examin'd and refuted, carries the Point somewhat far-
 ther than the learned *Marsham*, and concludes, that *the true Ori-
 ginal of Brute-Worship among the Egyptians, was their Use of
 Symbolical Writing*; for which he assigns a further Reason, viz.
 That when the Use of writing by *Letters* (as much more com-
 modious than the other) came generally to prevail, the Priests
 still continued the *hieroglyphic Characters* in their Works of
 Science and Religion; and, as the other grew abstruse and ob-
 solete to the Vulgar, to make them more sacred, the Priests,
 in a short Time, were the only Persons that cou'd read them,
 and then, to make them more sacred and mysterious, gave it
 out, that the Gods themselves were the Inventors of them,
 which might easily induce a deluded People to worship the very
 Creatures (as having something extraordinary in them) which
 their Gods had thought proper to delineate. Lib. iv.

(a) Sir *John Marsham*, *Can. Chron.* p. 38.

hieroglyphical Figures of Animals might introduce this strange A. M. 2433, &c.
 Worship, which the *Egyptians*, in Process of Time, came Ant. Chriſt. 1571, &c.
 to pay them. For, as thoſe *Figures* were made choice of, From Exod. i. to Chap. xiii.
 according to the reſpective Properties of each Animal, to expreſs the *Qualities* and *Dignities* of the Perſons, they re-
 preſented, which were generally their Gods, Princes, and great Men; the People became *gradually* accuſtom'd to theſe
 Figures, which they uſ'd to place in their Temples, as the Images of their Deities; and from hence, it is not abſurd
 to imagine, that they came at length to pay a ſuperſtitious Veneration to the living Animals themſelves.

BUT whatever might be the Reason or Inducements to *And the Ab-*
 this Kind of *Idolatry*, nothing was ſo remarkable in the *Egyptian* Religion, as the prepoſterous Worship, which that *ſurdity*
 Nation paid to Animals, ſuch as the Cat, the Dog, the Ibis, the Wolf, the Crocodile, and ſeveral others, which *thereof*.
 they had in high Veneration, not when they were alive only, but even after they were dead.

WHILST they were living, they had Lands ſet apart for the Maintenance of each Kind, and both Men and Women were employ'd in feeding and attending them. The Children ſucceeded their Parents in the Office, which was ſo far from being declin'd, or thought deſpicable among the *Egyptians*, that they glory'd in it as an high Honour; and, wearing certain *Badges*, to diſtinguiſh them at a Diſtance, were ſaluted by bending the Knee, and other Demonſtrations of Reſpect.

IF any Perſon kill'd any of theſe ſacred Animals *deſign-*
edly, he was puniſh'd with immediate Death; if *involuntarily*, his Punishment was referr'd to the Diſcretion of the Priests; but if the Creature ſlain was a *Cat*, an *Hawk*, or an *Ibis*, (whether the Thing was done with Deſign or no) † the Perſon was to die without Mercy, and ſometimes with-

† *Herodotus* gives us an Inſtance of this in a *Roman*, who happening accidentally to kill a *Cat*, the Mob immediately gather'd about the Houſe, where he was, and cou'd neither, by the Entreaties of ſome principal Men ſent by the King, nor by the Fear of the *Romans*, with whom they were then negotiating a Peace, be prevail'd on to ſpare his Life. And (what may ſeem ſtill more incredible) it is reported, that, at a Time, when there was a Famine in *Egypt*, which drove the Inhabitants to ſuch Extremity, that they were forc'd to feed on one another, there was no one Perſon accus'd of having taſted of any of theſe ſacred Animals. Universal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 3.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

without any formal Trial or Process. The extravagant Worship which they paid to some of these Animal Deities, (as to the Bull, at *Memphis*; the Goat, at *Mandes*; the Lion, at *Leontapolis*; † the Crocodile, at the Lake *Moëris*; and to many others, at different Places) exceeds all Belief. For they were kept in consecrated Enclosures, and well attended on by Men of high Rank, who, at great Expence, provided Victuals for them, which consisted of the greatest Dainties. Nor was this all: For these Creatures were wash'd in hot Baths, anointed with the most precious Ointments, and perfum'd with the most odoriferous Scents. They lay on the richest Carpets, and other costly Furniture; and, (that they might want nothing to make their Lives as happy as possible) they had the most beautiful Females of their several Kinds (to which they gave the Name of *Concubines*) provided for them.

WHEN any of these Animals dy'd, the *Egyptians* lamented them, as if they had been their dearest Children, and frequently laid out more than they were worth in their Burials. If a *Cat* dy'd in any House, all the Family shav'd their Eye-brows; and if a *Dog*, their whole Body: And thus, putting themselves in Mourning, they wrapp'd the dead Body up in fine Linnen, and carry'd it to be embalm'd; where being anointed with Oil of Cedar, and other *aromatick* Preparations to keep it from Putrefaction, it was bury'd with great Solemnity in a sacred Coffin. So true is that Reflection (1) of the Apostle, and with Regard to these *Egyptians* certainly it was made, that *though they knew God, yet they glorified him not as God; but changed the Glory of God into the Image of four-footed Beasts, and his Truth into a Lye; and worshipped and served the Creature, more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.* Amen.

BEFORE

† The *Crocodile* seems to be the last Animal, to which Mankind cou'd be tempted to pay divine Adoration: But that this might be done with more Safety, one of these Creatures was trained up to be tame, and familiar for the Purpose, and had his Ears adorn'd with Strings of Jewels and Gold, and his Forefeet with Chains. He was fed with consecrated Provisions at the publick Charge: And when Strangers went to see him, (which often happen'd out of Curiosity) they also carry'd him a Present of a Cake, dress'd Meat, and Wine, or a Drink made with Honey, which was offer'd to him by the Priests; and, when he died, his Body was embalmed, and buried in a sacred Coffin, at *Arsinoë*. *Herodotus*, l. 2. and *Strabo*, l. 17.

(1) Rom. i. 21, 23, 25.

BEFORE we leave *Egypt*, the sacred Historian seems to remind us to take a View of some of the monumental Works, that are found there, and which, having been built within the Compass of the Period, we are now upon, may well be presum'd to be the Product of some of the *Burthens* and hard Labour, which the *Egyptian* Kings laid upon the *Israelites*.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Their monu-
mental
Works and
Structures.
The Pyra-
mids.

† THE *Pyramids* were justly reckon'd one of the *Wonders* of the World, and there is more of them now remaining, than of all the other *Six*, which have been so much celebrated. Not far from the Place, where *Memphis* once stood, there are three of these Structures at no great Distance from each other; *two* of which are shut up, but the *Third*, which is the largest, and stands open for the Inspection of Travellers, we shall here describe, as a probable *Specimen* of all the rest.

IT is situate on a rocky Hill (which, in a gentle and easy Ascent, rises 100 Feet) in the sandy Defart of *Lybia*, about a Quarter of a Mile from the Plains of *Egypt*. Its *Basis* is generally suppos'd to be an exact *Square*, and every Side (according to those that have been as careful, as possible, in its Mensuration) about 693 *English* Feet: So that the whole *Area* of it contains 480,249 Square Feet, or something more than *eleven Acres* of Ground. Its *Altitude*, if measur'd by its *Perpendicular*, is 481 Feet, but, if taken according to the *Inclination* of the Pyramid, as it ascends, it is exactly equal to a Side of its *Basis*.

THE Ascent to the Top of this Structure is by Degrees, or *Steps*, which run round the whole Pyramid in a *Level*,
Z 2 and,

† It is a common Opinion, that the Word *Pyramid* is deriv'd from the *Greek*, *Pyr*, or *Pur*, *Fire*; and that these Structures were so call'd from their Shape, which ascended from a broad Basis, and ended in a Point, like a Flame of Fire. Others, whose Opinion *Vossius* seems to approve, say, that the Name comes from the Word *Pyros*, which, in the same Language, signifies *Wheat*, because they suppose them to have been the *Granaries* of the antient *Egyptian* Kings. But a late Writer, vers'd in the *Coptick* Tongue, has given us another *Etymology* from that Language, wherein *Pouro* signifies a *King*, and *Misi*, a *Race* or *Generation*; and the Reason, why the *Pyramids* had this Name given them, was, as he tells us, because they were erected to preserve the Memory of the Princes (who were their Founders) and their Families. *Wilkins's Dissert. de Ling. Copt.* p. 108.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571. &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

and, if the Stones were entire on every Side, wou'd make a narrow Walk. The first of these Steps is near four Feet in Height, and three in Breadth; but the higher one ascends, they proportionably diminish. They are made of massy and polish'd Stone, so very large, that the Breadth and Depth of every Step is one single Stone; but, as the Weather has, in many Places, worn these Steps, this Pyramid cannot be ascended without some Difficulty. According to the Computation of most modern Travellers, the Steps are 207 or 208 in Number, which end, * on the Top, in an handsome *Platform*, cover'd with nine Stones (besides two, that are wanting at the Corners) of 16 or 17 Feet square, from whence you have a pleasant Prospect of *Old-Cairo*, and the adjacent Country.

ON the 16th Step, from the Bottom of this *Pyramid*, there is a Door or Entry of three Feet and an Half in Height, and a little less in Breadth, thro' which you ascend insensibly, much about 76 Feet, and then come to another Passage, which very probably is of the same Dimensions with the first Entrance, but is so choak'd up with the Sand, which the Wind blows in, that it is no easy Matter for a Man of any Bulk to squeeze himself through it. Having pass'd this *Streight* however you meet with Nothing deserving Observation, till, on the left Hand, you enter a Passage, which leads into a Gallery 16 Feet high, and 162 Feet long; a very stately Piece of Work indeed, and not inferior, either in Curiosity of Art, or Richness of Materials, to the most sumptuous and magnificent Buildings! The Stone, of which this Gallery is built, is a white polish'd Marble, very evenly cut into large Tables, and jointed so close, as hardly to be perceiv'd by the most curious Eye: But what adds a Grace to the whole Structure, though it makes the Passage the more slippery and difficult, is the Acclivity, or Rising of the Ascent, which, however, is not a little facilitated by certain Holes, made in the Floor, about six Hands Breadth from one another, into which a Man may set his Feet, whilst he holds

* On this Platform *Proclus* suppos'd that the *Egyptian* Priests made their *Astronomical* Observations: But it is far from being probable, that these Structures were design'd for *Observatories*, and it is scarce to be conceiv'd, that the Priests wou'd take the Pains to ascend so *high*, when they might make the same Observations with more Ease, and as much Certainty *below*, having as free and open a Prospect of the Heavens, and over the Plains of *Egypt*, from the Rock, whereon it was built, as from the Pyramid itself. *Universal History*.

holds by a Bench of Marble, which runs all along the Gallery, with one Hand, and carries his Light in the other.

As soon as you come to the End of this Gallery, you enter another square *Hole*, much of the same Dimensions with the former, which brings you into two little Rooms, lin'd with a rich Kind of speckled Marble; and thence you proceed into the *Chamber of the Tombs*, or Sepulchres, which is very large and spacious, 32 Feet long, 16 Feet wide, and 19 Feet high. This Room stands, as it were, in the Heart and Center of the *Pyramid*, equidistant from all the Sides, and almost in the Midst between the *Basis* and the Top. The Floor, the Sides, and the Roof of it are all made of vast and exquisite Tables of *Thebaick* Marble, which, if they were not fully'd with the Steam of Torches, wou'd certainly appear very bright and shining. From the Top to the Bottom of the Chamber, there are about six Ranges of this Stone, which, being all siz'd to an equal Height, run very gracefully round it. The Roof is flat, and consists but of nine Stones, whereof seven, in the Middle, are each four Feet wide, and 16 Feet long, but the other two, which are at each End, appear not above 2 Feet broad a-piece, because the other Half of them is built into the Wall. The Stones lie a-thwart, over the Breadth of the Chamber, with their Ends resting upon the Walls on each Side.

AT the End of this glorious Room stands an empty Tomb, 3 Feet and an Inch wide, and 7 Feet 2 Inches long; the Stone, which it is made of, is the same with the Lining of the Room, a beauteous speckled Marble, above 5 Inches thick, and yet, being hollow within, and uncover'd at the Top, whenever it is struck, it sounds like a great Bell: Which is just such a Wonder, as the surprising *Echo*, that is heard in this Place, and, (as some Travellers tell us) will repeat the same Sound some ten or twelve Times together. The Figure of this Tomb is like an Altar, or two *Cubes* finely set together. It is cut smooth and plain, exquisitely finely polish'd but without any Sculpture or Engraving. It is not to be doubted, but that the Tomb was plac'd here, before the *Pyramid* was finish'd; and one Reason for its Want of Ornaments may be what the Inhabitants of the Country tell us, *viz.* That it was built for the Sepulchre of a King, who was never bury'd in it; and the common Opinion is, that it was the same *Pharaoh*, who, by the just Judgment of God, was drown'd in the *Red-Sea*.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chril.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i, to Chap.
xiii.

THESE are the principal Things, that have been observ'd of this *Pyramid*; only, (to give us a still fuller Idea of the Vastness of its Structure) *Pliny* has taken Care to inform us, that it was 20 Years in building; that 37,000 Men were, every Day, employ'd in the Work; and that 1800 Talents were expended upon them merely for Radishes and Onions. Which last Article may seem incredible perhaps to those, that were never in the Country; but when it is consider'd, that this is the ordinary Food of the common People, and that almost all those, who were employ'd in raising these great Piles, were Slaves and *Mercenaries*, who, besides Bread and Water, had Nothing but Radishes and Onions, there will be no Occasion for any Surprise or Wonder at the Largeness of this Account.

The Laby-
rinth.

A BUILDING of the like Date, and not of inferior Grandeur, was the *Labyrinth*, which stood in the *Heracleotick Nome*, or Province, near the City of *Arfinoë*, and not far from the Lake *Mæris*. The Design of this Structure seems to have been both for a *Pantheon*, or universal Temple for all the Gods, that were worshipp'd in the several Places of *Egypt*; and also for a general *Convention-House*, for the States of the whole Nation to meet, and enact Laws, and determine Causes of great Importance: And therefore it is said by some, to have been built at the common Charge of the twelve Kings, who, in those Days, reign'd all at once, in *Egypt*, as a Monument of their Magnificence, and a Place for their Sepulture.

To this Purpose *Herodotus* (*m*) tells us, that each Province or *Nome* had, in this Building, a distinct *Hall*, where its principal Magistrates us'd to meet; that these Halls were vaulted, were surrounded with Pillars of white Stone finely polish'd, and had an equal Number of Doors, opposite to one another, *six* opening to the *North*, and *six* to the *South*, all encompass'd by the same Wall; that there were three thousand Chambers in this Edifice, fifteen hundred in the upper Part, and as many under Ground; and that he view'd every Room in the upper Part, but was not permitted by those, who kept the Palace, to go into the subterraneous Part, because the Sepulchres of the holy *Crocodiles*, and of the Kings, who built the *Labyrinth*, were there. What he saw there, *as he reports*, seem'd to surpass the Art of Man: So many Ways out, by various Passages, and infinite Returns, afforded a thousand Occasions of Wonder, as he pass'd from a spacious Hall to a Chamber, from thence to a private

private Closet, then again into other Passages out of the Closet, and, out of the Chambers, into more spacious Rooms; where all the Walls and Roofs were not only encrusted with Marble, but richly adorn'd likewise with Figures of Sculpture.

To this Description of *Herodotus* others add, that this Edifice stood in the Midst of an immense Square, surrounded with Buildings at a great Distance; that the Porch was of *Parian* Marble, and all the other Pillars of the Marble of *Syene*; that within it were the Temples of the several Deities, and Galleries, to which one ascended by 90 Steps, adorn'd with many Columns of *Porphyry*, Images of their Gods, and Statues of their Kings, of a monstrous Size; that the whole Edifice consisted of Stone, the Floors were laid with vast Tables, and the Roof look'd like one continu'd Field of Stone; that the Passages met and cross'd one another, with so much Intricacy, that it was impossible for a Stranger to find his Way, either in or out, without a Guide; and that several of the Apartments were so contriv'd, that, upon opening the Doors, there was heard within a terrible Noise of Thunder.

SUCH was the Strength of this wonderful Building, that it withstood, for many Ages, not only the Rage of Time, but that of the Inhabitants of *Heracleopolis*, who worshipping the *Ichneumon*, or *Water-Rat*, the mortal Enemy of the *Crocodile*, (which was a peculiar Deity of *Arfinoë*) bore an inconceivable Hatred to the *Labyrinth*, which was the Sepulchre, *as we said*, of the sacred *Crocodiles*, and therefore assaulted and demolish'd it, tho' * there are some *Remains*

Z 4

of

* The Remains of this noble Structure are thus describ'd by our Author. " The first Thing you see is a large *Portico* of " Marble, facing the rising Sun, and sustain'd by four great " Marble Pillars, but compos'd of several Pieces. Three of " these Pillars are still standing, but one of the middle ones is " half fallen. In the Middle is a Door, whose Sides and *Entablature* are very massy; and above is a Frize, whereon is represented an Head with Wings, stretch'd out along the Frize, " and several *Hieroglyphics* underneath.——Passing through " this Portico, you enter into a fine large Hall, above 40 Feet " high, all of Marble. The Roof consists of twelve Tables of " Marble, exquisitely join'd, each 25 Feet long, and three " broad, which cross the Room from one End to the other; " and, as the Room is not arch'd, but flat, you cannot but " be struck with Admiration at the Boldness of its *Architecture*, " since it is scarce conceivable, how it cou'd continue, so many " Ages,

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

A. M. of it still to be seen, which retain manifest Marks of its an-
 2433, &c. tient Splendor.

Ant. Chrif. ONE Building more, suppos'd to be the Work of this Pe-
 1571, &c. riod, though, according to modern Accounts, it still stands
 From Exod. firm and entire, is the *Well* of the Patriarch *Joseph*. It is
 i. to Chap. entirely hewn out of a Rock, in a kind of an *oval* or *oblong*
 xiii. Form, being eighteen Feet wide, twenty-four long, and, in
 the Whole, two hundred and seventy-six deep. The Depth
 is properly divided into two Parts, which we may call the
upper and the *lower Well*; and to each of these there is a
 Wheel, which, being turn'd round by two Oxen in each
 Place, draws up the Water by a long Chain, to which are
 fasten'd several leathern Vessels, that fill and empty them-
 selves *alternately*, as the Wheel goes round.

Joseph's
Well.

To go down to the *second Well* (as we call it) which is
 but 15 Feet long, and nine wide, there is a Stair-Cafe, of
 so easy a Descent, that, some say, the Oxen, which draw
 the Water below, are, every Day, drove down and up it;
 tho' others report, that they are let down, and drawn up
 upon a Platform. However this be, it is certain that the
 Stair-Cafe turns twelve Times round the Well, (for which
 Reason the *Arabs* call it *the Well of the winding Stair-Cafe*)
 and of these Turnings, six have eighteen Steps each, and the
 other six have nineteen, which make two hundred and twen-
 ty-two Steps in all: And, to secure you from falling, as you
 go down, you have, on the Left-Hand, the *main Rock*,
 and

" Ages in a Position so improper to support so prodigious a
 " Weight. At the End of this *Hall*, over against the first Door,
 " there is a second *Portico*, with the same Ornaments as the
 " first, but less, by which you enter into a second Hall, not so
 " big as the first, but cover'd with eight Stones. At the End
 " of this Room, strait forwards, there is a third *Portico*, still
 " less than the second, as well as the Hall into which it leads,
 " though it has sixteen Stones to roof it; and, at the End of
 " this third Hall, there is a fourth *Portico* set against the Wall,
 " and plac'd there for *Symmetry* only, and to answer the rest.
 " The Length of these three Halls, is the whole Depth of the
 " Building, in its present Condition. It was on the two Sides,
 " and especially under Ground, that the prodigious Number of
 " Rooms and Avenues, mention'd by the *Antients*, were built.
 " ———— What is now remaining of it seems to be no more
 " than a fourth Part of the *inner Edifice*, which, in all Pro-
 " bability, had four Fronts, and twelve Halls, answering to
 " them: The rest are decay'd by Time, or demolish'd by De-
 " sign, as appears from the prodigious Ruins, which are to be
 " seen all around it." *Lucas's Voyages*, T. II. p. 18, &c.

and on the *Right*, some of the same Rock left, which serves both as a Wall to the Well on the Inside, and on the other, Side, as a Wall to the Stair-Case, which, at convenient Distances, has Windows cut in it, that convey the Light down from the Mouth of the Well.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chrift.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

When you go down to the lower Well (which has likewise a Stair-Case, but neither so wide, nor so deep as the other, and no *Parapet* on the Side of the Well, which makes the Descent dangerous) it is here that you see the Oxen at work, turning the Wheel, and drawing the Water from a Spring at the Bottom, about eight or nine Feet deep, which Water, passing through a Pipe into a large Cistern, is from thence drawn up again by two other Oxen, which turn the Wheel above; and so, from a *Reservoir* at the Top of the Well, the Water is convey'd into all the Apartments of the Castle of *Grand Cairo*, which (by the bye) as *Thevenot* tells us, both for Strength and Beauty, is one of the finest Palaces he ever saw; a Work not unworthy the *Pharaohs* and *Ptolemies*, who built it, and what comes not behind the Pomp and Magnificence of the *Pyramids*.

THERE are some other Buildings in this Place, such as *Joseph's Hall*, *Joseph's Prison*, *Joseph's Granaries*, &c. which the Inhabitants ascribe to that Patriarch, as they do indeed every fine Piece of Antiquity: But, as there is little or no Probability, that any of these came under the *Period*, we are now upon, we must refer the Reader, who is minded to satisfy his Curiosity in this Matter, (*n*) to the Authors, who have purposely treated of them; and shall only take notice farther, that the great *Selden*, in his *Arundel Marbles*, reckons the fabulous Stories of *Greece*, such as the Flood of *Deucalion*, the Burning of *Phaëton*, the Rape of *Proserpine*, the Mysteries of *Ceres*, the Story of *Europa*, the Birth of *Apollo*, and the Building of *Thebes* by *Cadmus*, together with the Fables of *Bacchus*, *Minos*, *Perseus*, *Æsculapius*, *Mercury*, and *Hercules*, to have fallen out under this Period; and it is certain that (*o*) the learned *Spanheim* makes several ancient Kingdoms, as that of the *Argives*, the *Cretans*, the *Phrygians*, the *Ethiopians*, the *Phœnicians*, the *Midianites*, *Canaanites*, *Idumæans*, and *Nabatheans*, either to have been founded, or to have flourish'd in this Time. But as these, and other Heathen Nations, had no *Historian*, or

Chronologer

(*n*) Vide, *Della Valle*, *Thevenot*, *Le Bruyn*, *Lucas*, *Marco Grimani*, &c. *Travels*; and *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. II.

(*o*) Vid. *Hist. Vet. Test.* Col. 310.

A. M.
2433, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1571, &c.
From Exod.
i. to Chap.
xiii.

Chronologer of their own, and the *Greeks*, who undertook to write for them, for Want of a certain Knowledge of their Affairs, have stuff'd their Accounts with the Rapes and Robberies of their Gods; we thought it more proper to *stop* here, than to enter into a *barren* Land, where the Country, for a long Way, lies waste and uncultivated; or, if perchance any *Fruit* is to be seen, like the fam'd fictitious *Apples* about the Banks of the *Dead-Sea*, it *crumbles*, at the very first Touch, into *Dust* and *Ashes*.

The END of the Third Book.

T H E

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
B I B L E.

B O O K I V.

Containing an Account of Things, from the ISRAELITES Departure out of EGYPT, to their Entrance into the Land of CANAAN. In all 40 Years.

C H A P. I.

From their Departure, to the Building of the Tabernacle.

T H E H I S T O R Y.

WHEN the *Israelites* set out from *Egypt*, they A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1491, &c. made *Rameses*, the chief City of *Goshen*, the Place of their general *Rendezvous*; and from thence, on the *fifteenth Day* of the *first Month*, xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24. they travell'd about ten or twelve Miles, to *Succoth*, where they made a Stop, and review'd their Company, which consisted of six hundred Thousand Persons, besides Children and Strangers: For Strangers of several Nations, having seen the Wonders, which were wrought for their Deliverance, left *Egypt* at the same Time, with a Purpose to accompany their Fortunes. The Israelites set forward from Rameses, and arrive at Succoth.

WHILE the Sense of their Deliverance, and God's Judgments was fresh in their Minds, *Moses* was commanded to let the People know, that when they came to be settl'd in the

M. A. the Land of *Canaan*, the *First-born*, both of Man and
 2513, &c. Beast, in Remembrance of God's having spar'd their *First-*
 Ant. Chris. born when he destroy'd the *Egyptians*, shou'd be set a-part,
 1491, &c. and dedicated to him: And, as *Joseph*, dying in the Faith
 From Exod. of this their Deliverance, had laid an Injunção upon his
 xliii. to Chap. Brethren, whenever they shou'd go from thence, to carry
 xxxiv. 24. his Bones out of *Egypt*; so *Moses* † took care to have the
 Coffin, wherein he had lain embalm'd for above an hundred
 and forty Years, not left behind.

Are thence
 guided by the
 Pillar of a
 Cloud (as
 afterwards
 all along) to
 Etham.
 † FROM *Succoth* their nearest Way to *Canaan* was cer-
 tainly through the Country of the *Philistines*; but, for fear
 that

† The *Jews* tell us, that, upon the *Israelites* Departure out
 of *Egypt*, every *Tribe* took care to bring along with them the
 Bones of the Ancestor of their Family: But, though they are
 not always to be credited in Matters of this Nature, and *Jose-*
phus does not seem to have dreamt of any such Act of filial
 Piety, or else he wou'd, in all Probability, have recorded it;
 yet St. *Stephen* (Acts vii. 15, 16.) seems to allude to some such
 Tradition among them, when he tells us, that *Jacob and the*
Fathers went down into Egypt, and were carry'd over into Sy-
chem, and laid in the Sepulchre, which Abraham had bought of
the Sons of Emmor. Universal History, l. 1. c. 7.

† It is somewhat difficult to make out the *Geography* of the
 Places where the *Hebrews* encamp'd, between their parting from
Rameses, and their Arrival at the *Red-Sea*; but the Account of
 those who have wrote upon the Subject, is,——That
 though there are two Places nam'd *Rameses*, which are a little
 differently pointed; yet are they but one and the same, or, at
 the most, that they differ only in this, that the one was the *Pro-*
vince, and the other the chief City of it: That *Succoth*, not far
 from *Rameses*, in the Way to the *Red-Sea*, had its Name from
 the Tents (for so the *Hebrew* Word signifies) which the *Is-*
raelites pitch'd here, as we find, upon the like Occasion, ano-
 ther Place, between *Jordan* and the Brook *Jabbock*, so named:
 That *Etham* lay on the Confines of *Egypt* and *Arabia Petraea*,
 not far from the *Red-Sea*, and gave the Denomination to the
 Wilderness adjacent: That *Pi-babiroth*, which, in our *English*,
 and some other Translations, is render'd as one proper Name,
 is by the *Septuagint* made Part of it. an Appellative, so as to
 signify a Mouth (for so the Word *Pi* may mean) or narrow Pas-
 sage between two Mountains, lying not far from the western
 Coast of the *Red-Sea*: That *Magaol* was probably a Tower or
 Castle (for the Word carries that Signification in it) upon the
 Top of one of these Mountains, which might give Denomina-
 tion to the City, which (as *Herodotus* informs us) lay not far
 distant

that a People, unaccustom'd to War, shou'd, in case of any A. M. Opposition, repent of their Deliverance, and take it into ^{2513, &c.} their Heads to return into *Egypt*, God order'd them to take ^{Ant. Chris. 1491, &c.} their *Rout* along the Coasts of the *Red-Sea*; and, for their ^{From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.} greater Encouragement and Security, himself undertook to guide and direct them, both in their *Marches* and *Encampments*, by the wonderful Appearance of a *Cloud*, in the Form of a large *Column*, which shaded them from the Heat of the Sun by Day, and, in the Night-time, became a Pillar of Fire, or a bright Cloud, to supply the Sun's Absence, and illuminate their Camp. By this Means they were enabled, upon any Occasion, to march both Day and Night: And, under this auspicious Guide, proceeding from *Succoth*, they came to *Etham*, (which gives Name to the Wilderness, on whose Borders it is situated) and there they encamp'd.

IN the mean Time, the † King of *Egypt* had Informa- ^{And thence to Pi-hahiroth.} tion brought him, that the *Israelites*, instead of returning to his

distant from it; and that *Baal Zephon* was by some learned Men thought to be an *Idol* set up to keep the Borders of the Country, and to hinder Slaves from making their Escape. *Baal* indeed, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, signifies *Lord*, and hence the Name is generally applied to the *Eastern* Idols; and the Word *Zephon* is thought to be deriv'd from the Radix *Zapah*, to *watch* or *spy*; and from hence it is conjectur'd, that this *Idol* had its Temple on the Top of some adjacent Mountain, and that the sacred Historian particularly takes Notice of it, to shew how unable it was (whatever Opinion the *Egyptians* might have of it) to hinder the *Israelites* from going out of *Egypt*. There is but small Certainty however to be gather'd from the *Etymology* of Words; and therefore the Authority of *Eusebius* shou'd preponderate with us, who makes it not an *Idol*, but a *Town*, standing upon the Northern Point of the *Red-Sea*, where the Ancients, especially the *Jews*, think that the *Israelites* pass'd it, and where there stands, to this Day, a *Christian* Monastery. *Patrick's* and *Calmet's* Commentaries, his *Dissertation* on the *Passage of the Red-Sea*, and *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. II.

† It is not unlikely, that some of the *mixt Multitude* (Exod. xii. 38.) which went along with the *Israelites*, observing this Alteration in their *Rout*, and not being able to perceive the Reason of it, might forsake them, and, returning to *Pharaoh*, inform him, that they had lost their Way, and were *intangled* among the Mountains: Or, (what is more likely) some *Spies*, which *Pharaoh* had upon them, seeing them leave the Way to *Horeb*, where they desir'd to go three Days Journey, in order to offer Sacrifices, concluded, that they never intended to re-

turn

A. M. his Dominions, were attempting their Escape into the *Deserts* of *Arabia*, by the *Cape* of the *Red-Sea*: And therefore grieving at the Loss of so many useful Slaves, and supposing, that by speedy Marches, he might overtake and recover them, he muster'd up what Forces he cou'd, and, for the greater Expedition, a considerable Quantity of * Chariots and Horsemen, and with these * put himself upon the Pursuit

turn to *Egypt*, but were running quite away, and might therefore bring *Pharaoh* the News thereof (as we may suppose) upon the 18th Day. *Patrick's Commentary.*

* *Josephus*, who loves to magnify Matters, when they tend to the Glory of his Countrymen, as well as conceal what wou'd occasion their Disgrace, tells us, that the *Egyptian* Army consisted of 600 Chariots, 50,000 Horse, and 200,000 Foot: But how so large a Number cou'd be rais'd in so short a Time, or what Need there was of so vast an *Armament* against a weak and defenceless People, is hardly conceivable. As therefore we may presume, that the Haste, which the *Egyptians* were in lest the *Israelites* shou'd get out of the Streights, wherein they were intangl'd, or make their Escape some other Way, before they came up with them, made them pursue them with Chariots and Horsemen for the greater Expedition; so we may observe, that the Chariots they employ'd in this Pursuit are call'd *chosen Chariots*, which most Interpreters imagine to be such, as were arm'd with *Scythes*, which being drawn with Horses, and fill'd with Men, who threw Darts and Spears, and other *offensive* Weapons from them, cou'd not but make a strange Havock wherever they came; and the Number, which the Scripture mentions, under proper *Captains* who might have the Direction of them, was enough to destroy all the *Israelites*, being worn with hard Bondage, weary'd with marching, destitute of Arms, Strangers to War, and now encamp'd in a very disadvantageous Situation. *Josephus's Antiquities*, l. 2. c. 15. *Ainsworth's Annotations*, and *Howell's History*.

* "Of all the infatuated Resolutions (to use the Words of the learned Dr. *Jackson*, l. 10. c. 11.) that either King or People adventur'd on, the pursuing the *Israelites* with such a mighty Army, after they had so intreated and urg'd them to leave their Country, may well seem, to every indifferent Reader, the most stupid, that ever was taken;" And so indeed the Author of the *Book of Wisdom*, Chap. xix. 3. justly censures it: For whilst they were yet mourning, says he, and making Lamentation at the Graves of the Dead, they added another foolish Device, and pursued them, as Fugitives, whom they had

Pursuit. But God, who well understood what Measures were taking in *Pharaoh's Court*, instead of suffering the *Israelites* to march round the Point of the † *Red-Sea*, as they probably intended, order'd them to advance along the *Coasts*

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

had intreated to be gone. But how much soever it was, that the *Egyptians* had suffer'd for detaining the *Hebrews*; yet, now that they were gone, they possibly might be of the same Mind with the *Syrians* (1 Kings xx. 23.) who fancy'd, that the God of *Israel* might not be alike powerful in all Places; or, if he was, they might nevertheless think, that *Moses's* Commission extended no farther than the *Meridian of Egypt*; or that if it did, it might however have no Power over mighty *Hosts* and *Armies*. They knew, at least, that the *Israelites*, as we said, had no Skill in military Matters, no Captains of Infantry, no Cavalry at all, no Weapons or Engines of War; whereas they were well furnish'd and equipp'd with every Thing of this Nature: And, upon these, and the like Presumptions, it was, that they became fool-hardy, and desperately resolute, either to bring back the *Israelites* to their Slavery, or to be reveng'd upon them for all the Losses, they had sustain'd, and the Penalties they had suffer'd. *Patrick's Commentary.*

† The *Red-Sea*, call'd by the Antients *Sinus Arabicus*, and now *Gulfo de Mecca*, is that Part or Branch of the *Southern Sea*, which interposes itself between *Egypt* on the *West*; *Arabia-felix*, and some Part of *Petræa*, on the *East*; while the northern Bounds of it touch upon *Idumea*, or the Coast of *Edom*. *Edom*, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, signifies *Red*, and was the Nick-name given *Esau* for selling his *Birth-right* for a *Mess of Pottage*. The Country, which his Posterity possess'd, was call'd after his Name, and so was the Sea, which adjoin'd to it; but the *Greeks*, not understanding the Reason of the Appellation, translated it into their Tongue, and call'd it ἑρυθρὰ θαλάσση; thence the *Latins*, *Mare rubrum*, and we, the *Red-Sea*. The *Hebrews* call it the Sea of *Suph* or *Flags*, by Reason of the great Abundance of that Kind of Weed, which grows at the Bottom of it; and the *Arabs*, at this Day, name it *Bubr el Chalzem*, i. e. the Sea of *Clysona*, from a Town situate on its western Coast, much about the Place, where the *Israelites* pass'd over from the *Egyptian* to the *Arabian* Shore. But, as the Word *Clysona* may denote a *drowning* or *overflowing with Water*, it is not improbable that the Town built in this Place, as well as this Part of the Sea, might have such a Name given it, in Memory of the Fate of the *Egyptians*, who were drown'd herein. *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, Vol. II.

A. M. 2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

The Egyptians pursue them.

of it, until they came to *Pi-bahiroth*, which lies between *Migdol* and the Sea, and there to encamp.

By this Time *Pharaoh* and his Army were come up with them; and, when the *Israelites* perceiv'd themselves hemm'd in on every Side, with the Sea in their *Front*, huge Mountains on their *Flank*, and the *Egyptian* Army in the *Rear*, they began to despair of any Means of Escape, and to clamour against *Moses* for having induc'd them to leave *Egypt*, and for bringing them into the Wilderness to be sacrific'd. *Moses*, however, being appriz'd of God's Design, instead of * resenting their Reproaches, endeavour'd to comfort them, by giving them Assurance, that God himself wou'd certainly fight for them, and by his Almighty Power bring Matters to such an Issue, that these very *Egyptians*, of whom

* The Words, which *Moses* makes himself speak upon this critical Occasion (Exod. xiv. 13, 14.) discover a wonderful Spirit and Bravery; and it is no bad Comment, which the *Jewish* Historian has given us of them. "Put the Case, says he, that you had deposited some great Trust in the Hands of a Person, that had hitherto manag'd all well and wisely for you, might not you reasonably depend upon that Man for the same Care and Kindness, and in the same Case too over again? What a Madness is it for you to despond then, where God himself has taken you under his Protection, and of his own free Bounty, perform'd every Thing by me, that can contribute to your Freedom and Security? Nay, the very Difficulty of the Case, you are in, is an Argument to inflame your Hope, rather than discourage it. He hath brought you into this Distress, on Purpose to shew his Power and Kindness in bringing you out again, even to the Surprise and Admiration of yourselves, as well as your Enemies. It is not God's Time to interpose with his almighty Power in small Matters, but in great and trying Calamities: When all Hope of Human help fails us, that is the Season for him to work out the Deliverance of those, who cast themselves upon him. And therefore fear Nothing, so long as you have him for your Protector and Defender, who is able to raise the Lowly and Oppress'd, and to lay the Honour of their Persecutors in the Dust. Be not afraid of the *Egyptian* armed Troops, neither despond of your Lives and Safeties, because you are, at present, lock'd up between the Sea and the Mountains, and have no visible Way in Nature to come off; for the God, whom you serve, is able to level all these Mountains, and lay the Ocean dry. His Will, in fine, be done." *Josephus's* Antiquities, l. 2. c. 15.

whom they were so much afraid, thou'd not one of them live to molest them any more.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

WITH these comfortable Words, he ordered them to advance towards the Sea-side; and, as they were advancing, the miraculous *Cloud* (we were speaking of) remov'd from the *Front* to the *Rear* of the *Israelites* Camp, and so, turning its *dark Side* towards the *Egyptians*, made them incapable of knowing what they were about; while, by its bright or fiery Side, which it turn'd to the *Israelites*, it gave them a Sufficiency of Light, and kept the two Camps from joining that Night.

As soon as the *Israelites* came to the Brink of the Sea, *Moses* wav'd his sacred Rod, and immediately a strong *East-Wind* blew, and drove the Waves back from the Land, and, by dividing the Waters, which stood *suspended*, as it were a *Wall*, on each Hand, made a dry and safe Passage for the *Israelites*, until they had gain'd the other Shore. The *Egyptians*, in the mean while, never suspecting but that they, with their Chariots and Horsemen, might safely follow, where they saw the *Israelites* go on Foot, enter'd after them into the Midst of the Sea: But, about Break of Day, they began to see their Error, and * their whole Army in the utmost Confusion. Their Chariots were some of them broken, others ran into Quick-sands, and others cast off their Carriages; so that, perceiving the Hand of God against them, they were turning about, and offering to flee, but all in

They pass the Red-Sea, where the Egyptians are all lost.

* The Expression in the Text is, that *God troubled the Host of the Egyptians*; and to enforce the Strength of this Expression, the *Jewish* Historian tells us, that, before God let loose the Waves upon the *Egyptians*, fierce Winds and Tempests, Storms of Hail and Rain, terrible Thunderings and Lightnings, and whatever else cou'd make their Condition horrible, were sent down upon them from above; and therefore it is not without good Reason, that these Words of the *Psalmist* have been apply'd to this Occasion. *The Waters saw thee, O God, the Waters saw thee, and were afraid; the Depths also were troubled: The Clouds poured out Water, the Air thundered, and thine Arrows went abroad. The Voice of thy Thunder was heard round about, the Lightning shone upon the Ground, the Earth was moved, and shook withal. Thy Way is in the Sea, and thy Paths in the great Waters, and thy Footsteps are not known: Whereupon it follows, thou ledest thy People, like Sheep, by the Hand of Moses and Aaron.* *Josephus's* Antiquities, l. 2. and *Psal.* lxxvii, 16, &c.

A. M. in vain. As soon as the *Israelites* were all landed, *Moses*,
 2513, &c. by the divine Command, stretch'd out his Rod again over
 Ant. Christ. the Sea : Whereupon the roaring Waves break loose from
 1491, &c. their *invisible Chain*, and come rushing upon *Pharaoh* and
 From Exod. his Army, and overwhelm them all ; while the *Israelites*,
 xiii. to Chap. beholding, with Wonder and Amazement, the Carcasses,
 xxxiv. 24. and rich Spoils of their Enemies thrown upon the Sea-shore,
 began, at least seemingly, to fear God, and to reverence his
 Servant *Moses* ; who, to celebrate this joyful Deliverance,
 having compos'd a *triumphant Hymn*, wherein he extols the
 Greatness of God's Power, and his amazing Mercy to his
People display'd on this Occasion, divided the Company into
 two great Choirs ; and, setting himself, and his Brother
Aaron at the Head of the Men, and his Sister *Miriam*, with
 a Timbrel in her Hand, at the Head of the Women, they
 sung and play'd *alternately*, and, in the Height of their Joy,
 intermixed *Dances*.

The Water
 of Marah
 made sweet
 for them.

BUT, notwithstanding all these thankful Acknowledgments
 of God's Goodness, scarce had the *Israelites* travell'd three
 Days from the *Red-Sea* into the Wilderness of *Shur*, before
 their excessive Thirst, and Want of Water, put them all
 out of Patience : And when, in a short Time, they met
 with *some* (at a Place, which is call'd *Marah*) it prov'd so
 * bitter, that they cou'd not drink it : This Disappoint-
 ment

* The Word *Marah*, in the *Hebrew* Language, signifies *Bitterness* ; and it was from the Taste of the Waters, that the Place receiv'd its Name. That there are several Fountains of bitter Water not far from the *Red Sea*, at some small Distance from the City *Arsinoë*, is attested by *Strabo*, *Diodorus*, and most modern Travellers ; but then the Question is, whether it was by the miraculous Power of God, or by the natural Virtue of the Wood, to which *Moses* was directed, that these bitter Waters were at this Time made *sweet* ? The Author of that excellent Book, call'd *Ecclesiasticus*, seems to be of the latter Opinion : For, having treated of the Honour and Esteem due to a *Physician*, he adds, *the Lord has created Medicines out of the Earth, and he, that is wise, will not abhor them. Was not the Water made sweet with Wood, that the Virtue thereof might be known ?* Eccles. xxxviii. 5. But, notwithstanding the Authority of this Writer, we have Reason to think, that there was no Tree in these Parts of this Virtue, because had its Virtue once been known, there is no Question to be made, but that others, as well as *Moses*, wou'd have made Use of it to the same Purpose ; but that the Writers, who make Mention of these bitter Waters,

ment inflam'd their Thirst; and, exasperated their Murmuring-
ings against *Moses*, 'till, by the divine Direction, he made
u'se of the Wood of a certain Tree, which, as soon as it was
thrown into the Water, chang'd its offensive Quality, and
made it sweet.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

FROM *Marah* they went, and encamp'd at † *Elim*,
where there were twelve Wells of Water, and a good
Quantity of *Palm*, or *Date-Trees*, and here they continu'd
for some Time. From hence they remov'd towards the Wil-
derness of *Sin*; but before they enter'd it, the suppos'd
Scarceness of Provisions made them begin to distrust God,
and to repent, from their very Hearts, that they had suffer'd
themselves to be decoy'd from the Plenty, they enjoy'd in
the Land of *Egypt*, into a barren, wild *Waste*, where they
cou'd have no other Prospect, but to die with Hunger: And
therefore, to convince these murmuring People of his Al-
mighty Power and Providence, God was pleas'd to inform
them, that he wou'd take Care to supply them with Food
from Heaven, which accordingly came to pass. For, that

And Manna
given them
from Hea-
ven.

A a 2

very

Waters, wou'd have told us, at the same Time, of a Tree, or
Trees, growing hard by, which had a *Medicinal* Quality to cor-
rect the Taste of them; but since we meet with nothing of this
Kind, we may reasonably suppose, that the Author of *Eccle-
siasticus* (a Book of modern Composition in Comparison of
Moses's Writings) speculating in that Chapter upon the Medicines,
which God had provided for Man's Use, offer'd this Hint purely
from his own Fancy, and without any Authority for it, and con-
sequently we may conclude, that the Correction of the Quality
of this Water is to be ascrib'd, not so much to the Virtue of the
Wood, as to the Power of God, who us'd it, rather as a Sign
to the *Israelites*, than as an Instrument to himself in doing it.
Le Clerc's Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations, and *Shuckford's*
Connection, Vol. III. lib. 10.

† In remarking the several Stations of the *Israelites*, from the
Red-Sea, until they came to the Mount *Sinai*, we must observe,
that *Moses* does not set down every Place, where they encamp'd
(as he does in *Numbers*, Chap. xxxiii.) but only those, where some
remarkable Thing was done; that *Elim*, where they were now
encamp'd, was esteem'd a pleasant and fruitful Place, at least in
Comparison of the Desert and barren Parts about it; and that
the Desert of *Sin*, which was their eighth Station, and *Rephidim*
their Tenth, lay at equal Distances, in their Way to the holy
Mountain. *Wells's* Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. II.

A. M. very Evening, he caus'd † *Quails* to fall among them in
 2513, &c. such great Quantities, as quite cover'd their Camp; and, on
 Ant. Chris. the next Morning, as soon as the Dew was gone, there lay,
 1491, &c. upon the Ground, a little white round Thing, much in the
 From Exod. Shape of a *Coriander-Seed*, which when the People saw,
 xiii. to Chap. they were struck with Admiration, and said one to another,
 xxxiv. 24. † *what is this?* And from thence they gave it the Name of
Manna. THIS

† The Word, which we render *Quail*, according to the Confession of the *Jews* themselves, is of uncertain Signification, and may denote a *Locust* as well as a *Quail*: But what shou'd rather incline us to the latter Acceptation, is that Passage of the *Psalmist*, (lxxviii. 27.) where he tells us, that *God rained Flesh upon them, as thick as Dust, and feathered Fowls, like as the Sand of the Sea*; which cannot, with any tolerable Propriety, be apply'd to *Insects*. But here we must remember, that this was done in the Middle of *April*, when these Birds are known to fly out of *Egypt* cross the *Red-Sea* in vast Quantities; so that the Sum of this Miracle will consist, not so much in the prodigious Number of them, that fell in the *Israelites* Camp, as in God's directing them thither, and in that very Evening too, according to his Promise, and his Servant *Moses's* Prediction. Universal History, l. 1. c. 7.

† Our Translation, and some others, make *Moses* fall into a plain Contradiction, in relating this Story of the *Manna*, which they render thus; *And when the Children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, it is Manna, for they wist not what it was*, Exod. xvi. 15. whereas the *Septuagint*, and several Authors, both antient and modern, have translated the Text according to the Original, *The Israelites seeing this, said one to another, what is this? For they knew not what it was*: For we must observe, that the Word, by which they ask'd (*What is this?*) was, in their Language, *Man*, which signifies likewise *Meat ready prepared*; and therefore it was always afterwards call'd *Man*, or *Manna*. Various are the Conceits, which the *Jewish* Writers have entertain'd concerning the Taste of this *Manna*, and some of them not unlikely have been borrow'd from the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, where he tells us of *Manna*, that it was able to content every Man's Delight, agreeing to every Taste, and attempering itself to every Man's Liking, *Wisd.* xvi. 20, 21. Whereupon some have affirm'd, that it had the Taste of any Sort of Fish or Fowl, according to the Wish of him that eat it, but these are idle Fancies; what we know of Certainty is this, — That, here in *Exodus*, *Moses* tells us, that its Taste was like *Wafers made with Honey*, and in *Numbers*, he says, that the Cakes made of it had the Taste of *fresh Oil*, Chap. xi. 8. so that we may conjecture, that
 it

THIS was the Bread, which the *Israelites* were to eat for the Space of forty Years, and therefore God was pleas'd to give these special Directions concerning it. —

That it was to be gather'd by Measure, an *Homer* for every Head, according to the Number of each Family; but this Direction some Persons slighting, and gathering above the Proportion that was allow'd them, found their Quantity miraculously lessen'd, while the more moderate had theirs increas'd: That it was to be gather'd fresh every Morning, and all, that was gather'd, consum'd that same Day; which Precept some Persons likewise neglecting, and keeping a Part of it until the next Morning, found that it was putrefy'd and stunk: That, on the *seventh* Day, (which was the † *Sabbath*) there was none to be found; and therefore, on the *sixth*, they were to gather a *double* Portion, which being laid up, according to God's Direction, against the ensuing Day, was never once known to corrupt: And that, to perpetuate the Memory of this † miraculous Bread,

A a 3

wherewith

it had a Sweetness, when gather'd, which evaporated in the grinding, and baking. It tasted like *Honey*, when taken off the Ground, but the Cakes made of it were as Cakes of Bread kneaded with *Oil*. Essay for a new Translation, and *Shuckford's* Connect. Vol. III. l. 10.

† This seems to be the first Time, that the *Rest on the seventh Day* was solemnly appointed. God indeed, from the very first, intended to preserve the Memory of the *Creation* in six Days, by appointing the *seventh* Day to be kept holy; but when, before the Flood, Men grew so wicked, as to neglect the Thoughts of God, they very little regarded the Distinction between this Day and others; and, after the Flood, the Dispersion of Mankind very much blotted it out of their Minds, as it did many other good Things. In the Family of *Abraham*, we may presume, the Remembrance of it was preserv'd, though not with such a strict Abstinence from all Labour, as was afterwards injoin'd; and therefore we read nothing of their resting from their Travails upon that Day, before their coming out of *Egypt*. The Truth is, they were kept under such severe Servitude, and Day and Night so press'd by their Task-masters to hard Labour without Intermission, that all Observation of the *Sabbath* was, very likely, laid aside; but when God brought them out of Slavery, he renew'd his Commandment for it, with this Addition (in Memory of the *Egyptian* Bondage) that they shou'd rest from all Manner of Labour upon that Day, *Patrick's* Commentary.

† Whether this *Manna* had those extraordinary Qualities in it or no, which some imagine, it must be allow'd to be

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1421, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

God's Direc-
tions con-
cerning it.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

They mur-
mur againſt
for Want of
Water, and
are miracu-
louſly ſup-
ply'd.

wherewith God had fed their Fore-fathers in the Wilderneſs ſo long, an *Homer* of it ſhou'd be put up in a Pot, and re-poſited in the *Ark of the Covenant* within the *Sanctuary*.

FROM the Deſart of *Sin* the *Iſraelites* had not advanc'd many Days Journey towards *Horeb*, 'till, coming to *Rephidim*, and finding no Water there, they fell into their old Way of diſtrusting God's Providence, and murmuring againſt *Moses*; but on this Occaſion, they ſeem'd to be more mutinous and deſperate than ever. It was in vain for *Moses* to endeavour to perſuade them to be patient a little, and wait God's Leiſure. His Words did but inflame, and carry them to ſuch an Height of Rage, that they even threaten'd to ſtone him; ſo that he was forc'd to have Recourſe to God, who was ſoon pleas'd to diſſipate his Fears by promiſing to ſignalize that Place by a miraculous Supply of Water, as he had lately done another by a miraculous Supply of Food. Taking therefore the Elders of the People (who might bear Teſtimony to the Fact) along with him, *Moses*, as he was commanded by God, went to a certain *Rock* on the Side of Mount *Horeb*, (which was diſtinguiſh'd from all the reſt by the divine Appearance reſting upon it) and no ſooner had he ſmitten it with his Rod, but Water in Abundance gush'd out at ſeveral Places, and, joining in one common Stream, † ran down to the Camp at *Rephidim*. This Station how-
ever,

be truly *miraculous* upon the following Accounts: 1. That it fell but ſix Days in the Week. 2. That it fell in ſuch a prodigious Quantity, as ſuſtain'd almoſt three Millions of Souls. 3. That there fell a double Quantity every *Friday*, to ſerve them for the next Day, which was their *Sabbath*. 4. That what was gathered on the firſt five Days ſunk, and bred Worms, if kept above one Day, but that which was gather'd on *Friday*, kept ſweet for two Days. And laſtly, That it continu'd falling while the *Iſraelites* abode in the Wilderneſs, but ceas'd as ſoon as they came out of it, and had got Corn to eat in the Land of *Canaan*. Universal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 7.

† It was this ſame Water which ſerv'd the *Iſraelites*, not only in this Encampment of *Rephidim*, and in that of Mount *Sinai*, but in their other Encampments likewise, perhaps as far as *Cadiſh-Barnea*. For the *Jews* have a Tradition, that, as theſe Waters were granted for the Sake of the Merits of *Miriam*, *Moses's* Siſter; ſo they happen'd to fail, as ſoon as ſhe dy'd; and hence it is, that, at the Encampment of *Cadiſh Barnea*, which was ſoon after the Death of *Miriam*, we find the People falling into Murmurings again for Want of Water. St. Paul, ſpeaking of this miraculous Rock, which he makes the Type of

Jeſus

ever, because it was so infamous for the Mutiny of the People, and their Distrust of God, *Moses* (as a Caution and Remembrance to them for the future) thought proper to have call'd *Massah* and *Meribah*, which signify *Temptation* and *Contention*.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

WHILE the *Israelites* continu'd at *Rephidim*, they were alarm'd by the Approach of an Army of *Amalekites*, who were just upon their Heels, and ready to fall upon them. Hereupon *Moses* order'd *Joshua*, a valiant young Man who was always about him, to draw out a Party of the choicest Men in the Camp, against next Morning, and to give the *Amalekites* Battle. When the next Morning came, *Moses*, attended by *Aaron* and *Hur*, went to the Top of an *Eminence*, from whence they might have a View of the Field of Battle; and, as the two Armies were engag'd, so it was, that while *Moses* held up his Hands to God in Prayer, and in one of them his wonder-working Rod, the *Israelites* prevail'd; but when, through Weariness, his Hands began to drop, the *Amalekites* had the better; which *Aaron* and *Hur* perceiving, set him down upon a Stone, and supported his Hands on each Side, until the going down of the Sun, in which Time the *Amalekites* were quite routed, and put to the Sword.

They defeat
the Ama-
lekites.

THIS good Success, in their first martial Enterprize, gave the *Israelites* great Encouragement; and the Action indeed was so very remarkable, that, to transmit it to Posterity, *Moses* was order'd to record it in a Book, for *Joshua's* future Instructions, and to offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving: Whereupon he rais'd, upon the Spot, an Altar, which he

A a 4

call'd

Jesus Christ, tells us, that it follow'd them, 1 Cor. x. 4. And from hence some have infer'd, either that the Streams, which gush'd out of the Rock, form'd themselves into a Kind of River, which follow'd them through all their Encampments, or that they carry'd the Rock itself in a Cart, like a great Tun always full, and always open to those that had an Inclination to drink. But these are idle Fictions, drawn from Words, that are not to be understood in a literal Sense; what we may learn of Certainty from modern Travellers is, ——— That, at the Foot of the Mount *Horeb*, there is still to be seen a Brook of Water, but as for the Rock itself, which is a vast large Stone standing separate by itself, there is no Water, that now runs from it, though there are, at present, to be seen twelve Holes, or Mouths, as it were, from whence the Water did flow heretofore. *Calmer's* Dictionary, under the Word *Rephidim*, and *Morizan's* Voyages, l. 1. c. 1.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.
Jethro viſits
Moses, and
advies him
to appoint
Deputies un-
der him.

call'd *Jehovah Niſſi*, the Lord is my Banner, as never doubting, but that God, who had commanded him to denounce † incessant War against the *Amalekites*, wou'd not fail to crown it with Success.

THE Defeat of the *Amalekites* open'd a Way for the *Israelites* to Mount Sinai, where God at first appear'd to *Moses* in the *Burning-Bush*, and not far from the Place, where his Father-in-law *Jethro* dwelt; † who, having heard what mightly

† The *Amalekites* were a People descended from *Amalek*, the Son of *Eliphaz*, the Son of *Eſau*, by a Concubine, *Gen.* xxxvi. 12. And the Ground of their Enmity against the *Israelites* is generally suppos'd to have been an innate Hatred, from the Remembrance of *Jacob's* depriving their Progenitor both of his *Birth-right* and *Blessing*. Their falling upon them however, and that without any Provocation, when they saw them reduc'd to so low a Condition by the Fatigue of their March, and the excessive Drought, they labour'd under, was an inhuman Action, and justly deserv'd the Defeat, which *Joshua* gave them: But then the Reason, why God thought fit to denounce a perpetual War against them, is to be resolv'd into this, — That, knowing the *Israelites* were pre-ordin'd by God to be put in Possession of the Land of *Canaan*, they came against them with an armed Force, in Hopes of frustrating the Designs of Providence concerning them. And this is the Reason, which *Moses* himself assigns for this Declaration of War; *because his* (i. e. *Amalek's*) *Hand is against the Throne of God*, (i. e. against God himself) *therefore the Lord will wage War against him from one Generation to another*, *Exod.* xvii. 16. The Injury done the *Israelites* was not so much, as the Affront offer'd to the divine Majesty, and therefore God threatens utterly to extirpate the Designers of it. Universal History, l. i. c. 7. and *Patrick's* Commentary.

† When it was, that *Jethro* came from *Midian* to visit his Son-in-law *Moses*, whether immediately after the Fight with the *Amalekites*, as it is here set down, or some Time after, when the *Israelites* were better settled, is a Matter much controverted amongst Interpreters. The *Jews* are generally agreed, and to them do some other great Names (as well as the learned *Usher* and *Selden*) assent, that this Visit happen'd after the Promulgation of the Law, in the first Year of their coming from *Egypt*, and in the Month *Tisri* (say the *Jews*) above three Months after God gave *Moses* the second Tables; though others will have it to have been in the second Year. It seems reasonable to think however, that *Jethro* wou'd take the first Opportunity to visit *Moses*, and to bring him and so near Relations together, when
once

mighty Things God had done for him, and the People he conducted, took his Daughter *Zipporah*, *Moses's* Wife, and the two Sons *Gerſhom*, and *Eliezar*, which he had by her, and brought them with him to the *Israelitiſh* Camp: Where, after mutual Salutations and Embraces, *Moses* entertain'd him with a particular Account of every Thing, that had befallen him, during his Abſence; and, in Return, *Jethro*, who was a devout Man, offer'd up ſolemn Praises to God, and join'd with *Moses*, and the reſt of the *Elders of Iſrael*, in Sacrifices, and ſuch holy Rejoicings, as were thought proper upon this Occaſion.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Ch.
xxxiv. 24.

WHILE *Jethro* ſtay'd in the Camp, he cou'd not but perceive the great Weight of Buſineſs, in hearing Complaints, and determining Differences among ſo numerous a People, which *Moses* muſt neceſſarily labour under; and therefore he gave him Advice, to ſubſtitute under him a certain Number of Officers, Men of Parts, and Men of Courage, ſuch as fear'd God, and hated Covetouſneſs, to be Rulers, ſome over *Thousands*, ſome over *Hundreds*, ſome over *Fifties*, and ſome over *Tens*, with proper Authority, for them to hear, and determine † all ſuch Matters, as they were

once he had heard the News of their Departure from *Egypt*, and paſſing the *Red Sea*; which he (as a Borderer upon the *Wilderneſs*) cou'd not long be a Stranger to. It is to be obſerv'd farther, that, had the Law been given before *Jethro's* Arrival in the *Israelitiſh* Camp, *Moses* cou'd hardly have eſcap'd ſaying ſomething of the moſt remarkable Paſſage of all others, God's glorious Appearance upon Mount *Sinai*, and the *Decalogue*, which he pronounc'd from thence: Whereas, all that he relates at this Meeting, is, what God had done to *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*; in what Manner he had deliver'd his People; and what Travail had come upon them by the Way, which comprehend their Paſſage of the *Red-Sea*, their Want of Water and Bread, their Engagemēt with the *Amalekites*, and, in ſhort, whatever we read in the foregoing Chapters. But of the moſt momentous Thing of all, we find him making no mention, nor *Jethro*, in the Congratulations which he gives him, taking any Manner of Notice; which we can hardly ſuppoſe wou'd, on either Side, have been omitted, had they been prior to this Interview; nor can we conceive, for what Reaſon *Moses* ſhou'd place the Account of this Interview in immediate Succeſſion, had it not follow'd the Fight with the *Amalekites*. *Patrick's Commentary.*

† The Words of the Text are, *Every great Matter they ſhall bring to thee, but every ſmall Matter they ſhall judge*, Exod. xviii. 22. And from hence ſome have imagin'd, that there were

A. M. were able, but where Causes were too difficult for their Decision, these to refer to him; which, in the Event, *as he told him*, wou'd prove a great Ease and Advantage both to himself, and the People: And this Advice of his as soon as he saw put in Execution, *Jethro* took leave of his Son-in-Law, and return'd into his own Country.

25¹³, &c.
Ant. Christ.
149¹, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Ch.
xxxiv. 24.

IT was three Months after their Departure out of *Egypt*, when the *Israelites* came, and encamp'd in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, before the Mount of God: And they had not been long there, before God call'd *Moses* to come up to him on the Mount, and there charg'd him to remind the *Israelites* of the many Wonders he had wrought in their Favour; and that, (notwithstanding their frequent Murmurings, and Distrust of his Providence,) if, for the future, they wou'd become obedient to his Laws, he wou'd still look upon them as his peculiar People, a favourite Nation, and a *Royal Priesthood*.

God pronounces the
Ten Commandments
from Mount
Sinai.

UPON his Descent from the Mount, *Moses* made a Report to the *Elders*, and they to the People, of the gracious Message, which God had sent them; which as soon as the People heard, they promis'd, in Return, all possible Obedience to the divine Commands. With this Answer of the People's

were several Sorts of Causes, that might not, at first, be brought before inferior Courts, and these they make to be four.

1. All *sacred* Matters, or Things relating to God and Religion.
2. All Matters of *Equity*, where the Rigour of the Law was to be mitigated.
3. All *capital* Cases: And lastly, all such Cases, as the *Rulers of Thousands* referr'd to *Moses*. What the other Rulers referr'd to him was indeed properly under his Cognizance, because it suppos'd an Incapacity in them, either for the Want of some Law, or a Non agreement among themselves, to determine it; but, where nothing of this happen'd, they had a full Power to judge finally. Neither was it the People (when a Cause was thought intricate) that were to bring it *primarily* before *Moses*, but, when any such Difficulty arose, as they were not able to surmount, the *Judges* (as *Moses* himself directs them, *Deut. i. 17.*) were the Persons, that were to order the Appeal to him. *Bring it to me*, says he, *and I will hear it*; which shews, that the Cause had been before the Bar of inferior Courts before, only they were not skilful enough to determine it. So that the Words in the Text do not intimate, that there were some Causes, which the other Judges might not try, if they were able; but only, where the *Causes were heard*, and they incompetent to decide them, these they were to refer to *Moses*. *Patrick's Commentary.*

People's *Moses* ascended the Mountain again, and receiv'd a Command from God, that all the People shou'd purify themselves, and be in Readiness against the *third Day*; for that, within three Days, || he wou'd come down upon the Mountain, and make a Covenant with them. In the mean Time he gave him strict Charge to set Boundaries about the Foot of the Mountain, which none might adventure to pass, under the severest Penalties: And when he had thus done, and the People had prepared themselves, according to the divine Injunction, on the third Day, they saw, early in the Morning, the Mountain surrounded with a thick Cloud, out of which proceeded such terrible Thunder and Lightnings, as fill'd them with Horror and Amazement.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Ch.
xxiv. 24.

THE Signal, for the People to approach the Mountain, was upon the first Sounding of the Trumpet; and therefore, as soon as it began, *Moses* brought them out of the Camp, as near to the Mountain, as the Barrier wou'd permit, and there they observ'd the whole Top of *Sinai* cover'd with Fire and Smoak, while the Foundations of it seem'd

|| It must be observ'd here, as also in other Places of the like Nature, that the Scripture, suiting itself to Man's common Way of Speaking and Thinking, assigns such Things to God, as are only proper to the *Effects*. Thus it is said that God *descended on the Mountain*, because he made his Presence more visible there by sensible and surprising Effects: And whereas it is said by the *Protomartyr*, St. *Stephen*, (Acts vii. 53.) *that the Jews received the Law by the Disposition of Angels*, and by St. *Paul* to the *Galatians*, iii. 19. *that the Law was ordained by Angels in the Hand of a Mediator*, there is in these, and the like Passages, no Contradiction between the *New* and *Old Testament*, which assigns all this Dispensation to God himself. For, though it was God, who descended (in the Sense we have explain'd it) upon the Mount, yet the Angels, these Courtiers of Heaven, attended him, and made up his Train; and though he himself pronounc'd the Law, yet the Thunder, and Lightnings, and Noise resembling the Sounding of a Trumpet, which were preparatory to such Pronunciation, may not improperly be ascrib'd to the Ministry of Angels. The Intent, however, of these Passages in the *New Testament* is, only to oppose the *Gospel* to the *Law* in this Respect, viz. that, when God gave the *Law*, he was surrounded with an awful Host of *Angels*, but when our Lord deliver'd the *Gospel*, he was cloath'd in our Flesh, and adapted himself to our Weakness. *Howell's History of the Bible*, and *Millar's Church History*.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Ch.
xxxiv. 24.

seem'd to tremble and shake under them. * In the Midst of this dreadful Scene, the Trumpet was heard to sound louder and louder, Claps of Thunder, and Flashes of Fire were more and more ingeminated; 'till, all on a sudden, every Thing was hush and silent, and then God was heard, from the

* Of all the Descriptions, that I ever read, there is no one seems to me so awful and tremendous, as this *Descent* of God upon Mount *Horeb*, and the amazing *Phænomena*, that attended it. The Pomp pretended to by *Pagan* Deities, even when set off with the Grandeur of Poetry, and the Magic of Numbers, is uncouth, ridiculous, and profane. The Procession of *Bacchus*, as it is describ'd by *Ovid*, (Lib. iii.) is neither more nor less, than a down-right drunken Riot, or the brutal Pastime of a disorderly Country-Wake. The boisterous Expedition of *Neptune*, even as it is painted by the great Master, *Homer*, (Iliad. xiii.) seems to represent nothing more august, than the Roaring of *London-Bridge*, or a Rabble of Sea-Monsters frisking in a Storm: Nay, that very famous Speech of *Jupiter* (Iliad. xviii.) where he maintains his *Supereminence*, by shaking Olympus with his *Imperial Nod*, and menacing his refractory Offspring, in Case they shou'd rebel, tho' it certainly be embellish'd with the utmost Force of Words, and Stretch of Art, is, at the best, but a lame and imperfect Copy, in the main Strokes of it, from the native Majesty of this unlabour'd Prose, in the ninth Chapter of *Exodus*. It must be own'd however, that our *English* Poet *Milton* has, in several Places, describ'd the usual Display of the Divine Majesty in a very magnificent Manner.

Clouds began
To darken all the Hill, and Smoak to rowl
In dusky Wreaths, reluctant Flames, the Sight
Of Wrath awak'd: Nor with less Dread the Loud
Ethereal Trumpet from on high 'gan blow,
At which Command, the Powers Militant,
That stood for Heaven, in mighty *Quadrate* join'd
Of Union irresistible, mov'd on
In Silence their bright Legions, to the Sound
Of instrumental Harmony. ———
Again, He on his impious Foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as Night: Under his burning Wheels
The stedfast *Empyrean* shook throughout,
All but the Throne of God. ———
And again, He ended, and the Sun gave Signal high
To the bright Minister, that watch'd: He blew
His Trumpet, heard on *Oreb* since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound the general Doom. ———

Paradise Lost, Lib. vi. and xi.

the Midst of the Fire and Smoak, (which still continu'd) to pronounce the Law of the *Decalogue*, or * Ten Commandments, which is indeed a compleat *System* of the *moral* Part of the *Jewish* Institutes, and in few, but significant Words, comprehends their Duty to God, to their Neighbour, and to Themselves.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Ch.
xxxiv. 24.

IN the mean Time the People, astonish'd at what they saw and heard, remov'd farther off, and, as soon as the divine Voice had ceas'd speaking, came to *Moses*, and, in the Height of their Fear and Surprise, besought of him, that, for the future, he wou'd speak to them in God's Stead, and whatever he enjoyn'd them they wou'd obey, because they were conscious, that were they to hear his dreadful Voice again, they shou'd certainly die with Horror and Astonishment. This Motion, as it bespake their Reverence and Respect, was not displeasing to *Moses*; and therefore he assur'd them, that all this wonderful Scene was not exhibited to them with a Design to create in them any *slavish* Fear, but a *filial* Confidence, and Submission to such Laws, as the divine Wisdom shou'd hereafter think fit to enjoin them: And, with these Words, he went up to the Mount again, where, (in Addition to the *Decalogue*) he receiv'd from God several other Laws, both *ceremonial* and *political*, which seem to have been calculated with a wise Design to preserve the People in their Obedience to God, to prevent their Intermixture with other Nations, and to advance the Welfare of their *Commonwealth*, by securing to all the *Members* of it a quiet Enjoyment of their *Lives* and *Properties*.

Gives the
Israelites
other Pre-
cepts, and
makes a Co-
venant with
them.

WITH this Body of Laws, which were all that God, for the present, thought fit to enjoin, *Moses* returning from the Mount, erected an Altar to God, and offer'd Burnt-Sacrifices and Peace-Offerings upon it; and, having caus'd the Contents of this new Covenant to be read to all the People, and exacted a solemn Promise from them, that they wou'd keep it faithfully, he confirm'd this Covenant, by sprinkling the Altar, the Book, and the People with the Blood of the *Victims*,

* These Ten *Commandments*, as contain'd in the xxth Chapter of *Exodus*, are so very well known, that there is no Occasion here for the Repetition of them: And in what Manner they are to be dispos'd of in the two *Tables*; whether *four* are to be plac'd in the *first*, and *six* in the *second* Table (which is the common Distribution) or an *equal* Number is to be appropriated to each Table (as *Philo*, and his Followers among the *Jewish Rabbins* contend) is not a Question of Moment enough to be discuss'd in this Place.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chris. 1491, &c. From Exod. xliii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Victims, which were slain upon this Occasion; and then order'd twelve Pillars to be rais'd, according to the Number of the twelve Tribes, as a standing Monument of this Alliance between God and them.

As soon as *Moses* had made an End of this Ceremony, he took *Nadab*, *Abihu*, and seventy of the Elders of *Israel* some Part of the Way towards the Mountain, where, (without incurring any Hurt) they were vouchsaf'd a Prospect of the divine Presence, and where, having committed the Care of the People to them, he took *Joshua* along with him, and went up higher to the Top of the Mount, where he continu'd for the Space of forty Days.

Moses receives Instructions concerning the Tabernacle, &c.

HERE it was that God, calling him nearer to himself, and into the Cloud where he then resided, instructed him in what Manner the Tent or *Tabernacle*, wherein he intended to be worshipp'd, was to be made. He describ'd to him the Form of the *Sanctuary*, the Table for the *Shew-bread*, the Altar of *Frankincense*, the Altar for *Burnt-Offerings*, the Court of the *Tabernacle*, the *Basin* to wash in, the *Ark*, the *Candlestick*, and all the other sacred Utensils. He gave him the Form of the sacerdotal Vestments, and taught him how the Priests were to be consecrated; what Part of the Oblation they were to take, and in what Manner the perpetual Sacrifice was to be offer'd. He nam'd the two chief Men, *Bezaleel*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, and *Aholiab*, of the Tribe of *Dan*, who were to be the Builders of the *Tabernacle*; and, having recommended a strict Observation of the *Sabbath*, he gave him the two || Tables of Stone, wherein, with his own Hand,

|| Who was the first Inventor of Letters, and what Nation had the Invention soonest amongst them, is variously disputed by the Learned. The Invention seems to be a little too exquisite, to have proceeded from Man; and therefore we have, not without Reason, (Vol. I. p. 356.) derived its Original from God himself, who might teach it *Adam*, and *Adam* his Posterity. As to particular Nations however, some say that the *Phœnicians*, others the *Ethiopians*, and others again that the *Affyrians* had the first Invention of them; but, upon better Grounds, it is thought by *Eusebius*, (in his *Prepar. Evang.* l. 18.) that *Moses* first taught the Use of Letters to the *Jews*, and that the *Phœnicians* learnt them from them, and the *Grecians* from the *Phœnicians*. The Matter, whereon Men wrote, in ruder Times, was different; some, on the Rinds of Trees, others on Tiles, and others on Tables, which last was chiefly in Use among the *Jews*;

Hand, at least by his own Direction, were written the Ten great Commandments which were the Sum and Substance of the moral Law.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

WHILE *Moses* was conversing with God on the Mount, and *Joshua* waiting for his Return, the People in the Camp, who, by Reason of his long Absence, began now to give him over for lost, assembled themselves in a riotous Manner about *Aaron's* Tent, and demanded of him to make them some Gods to go before them. The Demand was astonishing, and such was his Weakness, and Want of Courage, that, instead of expostulating the Matter with them, he tamely submitted to their Request; nay, he contributed not a little to their *Idolatry*, by ordering them to bring a sufficient Quantity of their golden Ornaments, which when he receiv'd from them, ‡ he tied in a Bag,

The People
in the mean
Time make
them a Gold-
en Calf.

Jews; and probably from this Example given them by God. The Instrument, wherewith they wrote, was not a Pen, but a Kind of Engraver, made of Iron or Steel, call'd a *Stylus*, which was sharp at one End, for the more convenient indenting, or carving the Character, and broad at the other, for the Purpose of scraping it out. To perpetuate the Memory of any Thing, the Custom of Writing on Stone or Brick was certainly very antient, and (as *Josephus*, in the Case of *Seth's* Pillars, tells us, Antiq. l. 11.) elder than the Time of the Flood. The Words of the *Decalogue*, spoken by God himself, were such as deserv'd to be had in everlasting Remembrance; and therefore God was willing to have them engrav'd upon durable Matter; but then the Question is, Whether it was God himself, with his own Finger, as we say, or some other Person, from God's Mouth, who wrote them. In *Exodus* xxxiv. 27, 28. we are told, that the Lord said unto *Moses*, write thou these Words; for, after the Tenour of these Words, have I made a Covenant with thee, and with *Israel*; and that, accordingly, he wrote upon the Tables the Words of the Covenant, even the Ten Commandments. Now since it is a common Form of Speech, that what a Superior commands to be done, that he does himself; the Meaning can be no more, than that the Words of the *Decalogue* were written by the Hand of *Moses*, but by the Direction and Dictation of God. *Howell's*, and the Universal History.

‡ The Words in the Text are these ——— All the People brake off the golden Ear-rings, which were in their Ears, and brought them unto *Aaron*, and he received them at their Hands, and fashioned it with a Graving Tool, after he had made it into a molten Calf, *Exod.* xxxii. 3, 4. But here seems to be a great Mistake in most Versions, as well as our own, and what but few Criticks

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chris. 1491, &c. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

a Bag, and thereof made them a molten Calf. Nor was this all, for seeing them so highly delighted with their new-made God, he set it upon a Pedestal, in full Sight of the Camp, built an Altar before it, and appointed the next Day for a solemn Festival, which was begun with offering of Sacrifices to it, and concluded with Feasting, and Dancing, and all † Kinds of noisy Mirth:

GOD,

Criticks and Expositors have yet espied. For it may very well be ask'd, who taught *Aaron* to engrave, or how cou'd this *Idol* be engraven so soon, since it is said, that *Aaron* presented it to the People on *the Morrow*? If the Custom of engraving molten Work was then known, how comes it, that we hear nothing of it even in *Solomon's* Time, since it may be presum'd, that the Furniture of *Solomon's* Temple was wrought with much more Art, than the Figure of *Aaron's* Calf? The whole Foundation of this Mistake seems to lie in the Ambiguity of the *Hebrew* Word *Tsour*, which sometimes signifies to *fashion*, and sometimes to *bind* or *tie*, and of the Word *Chereth*, which signifies a *Graving-Tool*, and sometimes a *Sack*, or *Bag*, 2 Kings v. 23. And therefore the Nature and Circumstances of the Thing here spoken of might have directed the Translators to think of putting the great Quantity of Ear-rings, which were brought to *Aaron*, into a Bag; which wou'd have prevented the Incongruity, that the *Geneva* Version has incurr'd, of engraving the *Calf*, before it was molted; for so it runs, *he fashion'd the Ear-rings with a Graving-Tool, and made a molten Calf of them.* Essay for a new Translation.

† The Words in the Text are, (Exod. xxxii. 6.) *the People sat down to eat, and to drink, and rose up to play*; and from hence some have suppos'd their Sense to be, that, after the *Israelites* had eaten of the Sacrifices offer'd to this new *Idol*, and drank very plentifully, they committed *Fornication*, after the Manner of *Heathen* Worshippers, and, as in After Ages, they were induc'd to do in the Case of *Baal-peor*, Numb. xxv. 1, 2. It cannot be deny'd indeed, but that those *sacrificial* Feasts, among the *Heathens*, were usually attended with Drunkenness and Lasciviousness, which generally go together; and that the Word, which we render *play*, is the same which *Potiphar's* Wife makes use of, when she tells her Husband, that his *Hebrew* Slave came in to *mock her*, i. e. to violate her Chastity; but since there is no Intimation of this in the Story, but only of *their singing and dancing*, it is hardly presumable, that they could become so very profligate, the very first Day of their setting up *Idol* Worship. Much more reasonable is it therefore to suppose, that all this Merriment of theirs was in Imitation of the *Egyptians*, who, when they

GOD, in the mean Time, who knew what had pass'd in the Camp, acquainted his Servant *Moses*, that the People, whom *he had brought out of Egypt*, had so soon forgot their Promises and Engagements, that, at that very Time, they had made them a *molten Image*, and were worshipping a *Golden Calf*; a Defection so provoking, that he threaten'd to extirpate the whole Nation of them, but, at the same Time, promis'd to make him the Father and Founder of a Nation, as numerous, and more powerful than these ungrateful Rebels were. But so far was *Moses* from seeking his own Interest in their Destruction, that he threw himself at the Feet of the Lord, and interceded for their Pardon with so much Importunity, that, having obtain'd a kind of Promise of it, he took the Tables, and his Servant *Joshua* with him, and so hasten'd down from the Mount.

A. M. 2513, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1491, &c.
From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

God's Indignation hereupon.

As soon as they were come to the Bottom, *Joshua* hearing the Noise, which the People were making, express'd his Apprehensions, that possibly there might be some *Alarm*, or *Engagement* in the Camp; but *Moses*, who knew what had happen'd, told him, that the Noise seem'd to be an Indication of *Joy*, rather than of *War*; and as they drew near, and saw the *Golden Calf*, and the People singing and dancing about it, *Moses*, for Indignation, throwing down the *Tables* he had in his Hands, brake them in Pieces; and then, taking the *Idol-Calf*, he put it in the Fire, and melted it, and so † reducing it to Powder, and mixing

Moses's just Concern, and Revenge upon the Ring-leaders.

they had found out their God *Apis*, (whereof this *Golden Calf* was design'd for an *Emblem*) were us'd to bring him, in solemn Pomp, to *Memphis*, the Royal City, with Children going before in Procession, and all the Company singing a Song of Praise to the Deity. *Patrick's Commentary.*

† This Action of *Moses*, in melting, grinding, and pounding this *golden Idol*, in order to make the People drink it, is by some thought contrary to our present *Philosophy*, and the Account, which *Alchymists* give us of the Nature of Gold. Nothing is more commonly receiv'd, than the Notion, that Gold cannot be destroy'd; and yet the *Royal Academy at Paris* have a Burning Glass, that will vitrify it in an Instant, by evaporating all the Sulphur of it, which crackles, and flies up in a thick Smoak, whilst the *Glass*, that remains, can never be reduc'd into any other Form. That Gold can be reduc'd into a fine Powder, every Gold Beater can inform us; and who can tell,

A. M. mixing the Powder in Water, (to make them more sensible of their Folly in worshipping That for a God, which was to pass through their Bodies) he made them drink From Exod. it up.

xiii. to Chap.

xxxiv. 24.

AFTER this, *Aaron* was call'd to give an Account, how he came to indulge the People in this idolatrous Humour; but all the Excuse, that he cou'd make, turn'd upon their *tumultuous*, and his *timorous* Temper, which compell'd him to comply with their Demand. But *Moses's* Business was, to take Vengeance on the Idolaters; and therefore, turning from his Brother *Aaron*, he call'd such to his Aid, as had not been guilty in the late Rebellion, and, seeing some of the Tribe of *Levi* adjoin themselves to him, † he appointed them to take their Swords, to go through the Camp, and, without any Respect to Age or Quality, Friendship or Consanguinity, to kill all the *Ringleaders* of this idolatrous Defection, and their Adherents; which the *Levites* accordingly executed, so that, at this Time, there were about three thousand Persons slain. Nor did the *Levites*, in Consideration of this their laudable Zeal and Obedience, go long unrewarded: For, upon the Institution of the Priesthood, they

but that *Moses* might have some particular Secret for doing this, which we know nothing of? By the Help of a File however he might grate it into a Dust, as fine as Flour, that is ground in a Mill. But the *Rabbinical* Reason, for his giving the People this *Gold-Powder* to drink, viz, that he might distinguish the *Idolaters* from the rest, (because as soon as they had drank, the Beards of the former turn'd red) is a little too whimsical to be regarded. Universal History, l. i. c. 7.

† This may be thought too hazardous an Undertaking, and, for a few *Levites* to kill 3000 of the People, impracticable; but as they had God's Warrant for what they did, and knew, at the same Time, how timorous Guilt is apt to make Men, they might be confident, that none wou'd have Courage to oppose them. Before that *Moses* call'd any *Avengers* to his Assistance, the Text tells us, that *he saw that the People were naked, for Aaron had made them naked to their Shame*, Exod. xxxii. 25. where, if by *Nakedness* we are (with some Expositors) to understand their Want of *Arms*, which they had laid aside, that they might be more light and nimble to dance about the Idol, it is plain, that the *Levites* might have less Trouble in slaying such a Number of People, loaded with Liquor perhaps, and (as it usually happens in the Conclusion of a Festival) weary with Dancing and Sports, and without any Weapons about them, to make Resistance. *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

they were appointed to the Honour and Emoluments of that Office, though in Subordination to that of *Aaron* and his Posterity.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

THE People, in the mean Time, having seen this dreadful Example on the *Delinquents*, were not in a little Fear and Consternation. But *Moses*, the next Day, contented himself with reproving them for their Ingratitude and extreme Folly, and, at the same Time, promis'd them, that he wou'd go up to the Mount again, and try † how far his Prayers wou'd prevail with the divine Mercy, to avert the Punishment, which they justly deserv'd. To shew how ever how highly they had offended God by their wicked *Apostacy*, he took a *Tent*, and, pitching it out of the Camp at a good Distance, he call'd it *the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, whither the *cloudy Pillar* (to let them see that God wou'd no longer dwell among them) immediately repair'd; and whither *Moses*, whenever he wanted to consult the *divine Oracle*, was wont to resort. Nor was it long after thls, that God, (to comfort and encourage him under all the *Fatigue*, that he had with an obstinate People) granted his Request, and shew'd him as much of his *Glory*, as his Nature was able to bear, and gave him fresh Orders to prepare two other Tables of Stone, and to come up again to him on the Mountain all alone. *Moses*, accordingly, early next Morning, repair'd to the Mountain, with the two Tables, and having prostrated himself before God, implor'd of him to pardon the Sins of his People; which God graciously condescended to do, and withal to make a farther Covenant with them, upon Condition, that they wou'd keep his Commandments; wou'd

His Inter-
cession for
the People,
and receiv-
ing from
God fresh
Tables of the
Law.

B b 2

observe

† *Moses* indeed was by Lineage and Descent of the Tribe of *Levi*, which, tho' it forfeited the *Primogeniture* and *Regalia*, by being concern'd in the Blood of the *Schechemites*, was nevertheless dignify'd with the *Priesthood*, which gave him a Right of approaching God, as an *Intercessor* for a rebellious, and back-sliding People. *Aaron*, in Strictness, was both the High-Priest, and his Elder Brother, but, besides that, he, by his imprudent Compliance in the Business of the *Golden Calf*, had, at this Time, not only forfeited the Honour of *Mediation*, but stood himself in Need of an Atonement: There seems to be something in the Character, that is given of *Moses's* singular *Meekness*, that might entitle him to the Spirit of Intercession, and make the younger, in this Office, be preferr'd before the elder.

Bibliotheca Bibl. Append. of the Occas. Annot.

A. M. observe his *Sabbaths*, his *Passover*, and other appointed
 2513, &c. *Festivals*; and wou'd not worship the Gods of the *Ca-*
 Ant. Chris. *naanites*, nor make any Alliances with the People of the
 1491, &c. *Country*.
 From Exod. Chap.
 xlii. to Chap.
 xxxiv. 24.

The OBJECTION.

“ THE Kindness of God to the *Israelites*, in giving
 “ them the Possession of the Land of *Canaan*, was
 “ very remarkable; but, since he intended it at first,
 “ why did he delay it so long? *Hope deferred makes the*
 “ *Heart sick*, says *Solomon*; and to be *forty Years* in exe-
 “ cuting what might have been done in *forty Days*, is
 “ hardly consistent either with the Wisdom or Goodness
 “ of God. Between *Egypt* and *Canaan* (if we may be-
 “ lieve * *Philo*) there is not above three Days Journey;
 “ and therefore it looks a little strange and unaccountable,
 “ that God shou'd not march his People directly thither,
 “ and settle them at once, rather than lead them aside into
 “ a barren Wilderness, and there carry them in a *Wild-*
 “ *goose-Chase* for the Space of almost half a *Century*, al-
 “ ways pester'd with their Complaints, and forc'd to feed
 “ them at the Expence of Miracles. It can hardly be
 “ thought, from the Tenour of their History, but that his
 “ particular Providence attended them, wherever they went:
 “ (a) As Miracles however are not to be multiply'd with-
 “ out a manifest Necessity, there is no Reason for our
 “ thinking, that God himself went before them, during
 “ their Travels in the Wilderness, in a *visible Pillar of*
 “ *Fire and Smoak*, since the whole Matter (which the
 “ *Jews* make so much boast of) might be no more than
 “ a kind of ambulatory Beacon, or a *Huge*, portable *Fire*,
 “ under the Direction of a proper Officer, and in a fit
 “ Machine, highly elevated on a Pole, which was carry'd
 “ before the first Line of the Camp, and from thence cou'd
 “ be seen by all the rest. This was a customary Practice,
 “ in waste and desolate Countries, for the Conveniency of
 “ Travelling; and therefore we may suppose, that the
 “ *Israelites*, when they enter'd the Wilderness, in Confor-
 “ mity to other Nations, made use of the same Expedient;
 “ and that, to some such portable *Fire* as this, whose
 “ *Flame*, but not its *Smoak*, might be very far seen by
 “ *Night*, and whose *Smoak*, but not its *Flame*, might be
 “ perceiv'd at a great Distance by *Day*, all the strange
 “ Things,

* De Vita Mosis, Lib. i. p. 627.

(a) Toland's Hodegus.

“ Things, which are said of the different *Phases* of this pre- A. M.
 “ tended miraculous Pillar, may with great Facility be referr’d. 2513, &c.
 “ *MOSES*, no doubt, in sundry Respects, was no Ant. Christ.
 “ mean Politician; and therefore he cou’d not but know, 1491, &c.
 “ that the Pretence of a divine Revelation wou’d give his From Exod.
 “ Laws a better Sanction among the People, and so, to xliii. to Chap.
 “ prepare the Way, he devis’d the terrible *Scene* of God’s xxxiv. 24.
 “ descending upon Mount *Sinai*, and abiding there, in
 “ *Smoak* and *Thunderings*, and *Lightning*, while himself
 “ went up to receive his Will, but prohibited all the rest
 “ (except his Brother *Aaron*, who was let into the *My-*
 “ *stery*) (*b*) under the Penalty of immediate Death, to ap-
 “ proach the Mountain: For had they been permitted to
 “ do this, the Secret had been soon found out, and the
 “ Miracle spoil’d, which in all Probability (*c*) was Nothing
 “ more than a *Vulcano*, or Irruption of Fire out of the
 “ Top of the Mountain, whereof he, knowing the Cause,
 “ took the Advantage, and palm’d it upon the People
 “ for the tremendous *Presence of God*, attended with his
 “ *Hosts of Angels*.

“ AND indeed, considering the Nature of the *Laws*,
 “ which he deliver’d to the People, we have small Reason
 “ to suppose that God had any Hand in them; since they
 “ are many of them *absurd* and *ridiculous*, some contrary
 “ to common Justice, and others Nothing else, but *Egypt-*
 “ *ian* Rites reviv’d. For, even in the *moral Part* of
 “ them, what can be more unrighteous, than (*d*) God’s
 “ *visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children*,
 “ *unto the third and fourth Generation*? In the *Political*,
 “ what more *unjust*, than the setting up *Asylums* for every
 “ Rogue and Ruffian to flee to? What more *cruel*, than
 “ the *Lex Talionis*, or a Permission to take Revenge in
 “ cold Blood? What more *ridiculous*, than to prohibit
 “ Men’s sowing *Maslin*, or wearing *Linsey-Woolsey*, or
 “ gravely to decree, that an *Ox* and an *Ass* shou’d not be
 “ yolk’d together? And as for the *Ceremonial*, (*e*) the
 “ *Urim* and *Thummim*, the *Ark* and the *Cherubims*, the
 “ *High Priest’s Vestments*, and almost every Ordinance in
 “ the Worship of the *Tabernacle*, are manifestly borrow’d
 “ from the *Egyptians*.

B b 3

MOSES

(*b*) Exod. xix. 12, 13. (*c*) *Nicholls’s* Conference with a
 Theist, p. 273. (*d*) Exod. xx. 5. (*e*) *Spencer de Le-*
 gibus Heb. Lib. iiii.

A. M.
2613, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xliii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

“ *MOSES* perhaps knew better, and wrote only according to the Conceptions of the Vulgar, whom he purpos’d to keep in Ignorance ; or otherwise, we cannot but say, that he discovers gross Notions of God, when (f) he talks of his *Face*, his *Back-parts*, and his *covering him with his Hand* ; and, when he wishes (g) to be *blotted out of the Book, that God had written*, (which some suppose to mean his *eternal Damnation*) he seems to be absolutely *prophane* and *irreligious*, devoid of all Fear of God, as well as all Sense of Danger in a future State.

“ THE less Reason we have to wonder, that we find *Aaron*, his Brother and Companion in this Affair, and who was now left *Regent* in his Absence, so easily complying with the impious Request of the People, and, instead of remonstrating to the idolatrous Motion, with his own Hands making them an *Idol*, and with his own Mouth proclaiming a *Festival* in Honour of it : But why he shou’d think of a *Calf*, above all other Creatures, to be an *Hieroglyphic* of the Deity, or why the People, who had seen so much of the *Handy-work* of God, shou’d be so overjoy’d at the setting up the Figure of so *stupid* an Animal, to be the Object of their Worship, may justly raise our Astonishment and Admiration.”

Answer’d by
showing that
the miracu-
lous Cloud
was no Ma-
chine of hu-
man Contrivance.

THAT in the Desarts of *Arabia*, and such extended Plains, (for there were no Cities, Rivers, or Mountains, for Land-Marks) it was a general Custom, before the Invention of the *Compass*, to carry Fire before Armies, in order to direct their March ; and that (notwithstanding the present Use of the *Compass*) the Guidance of Fire is practis’d among the *Caravans* in the *East*, and by the great Number of *Pilgrims*, who go every Year from *Grand Cairo* in *Egypt*, to *Mecca* in *Arabia*, cannot, by any one, that is acquainted either with *antient* or *modern* History, be deny’d : And had the sole Intent of the *cloudy Pillar* been, to guide, and conduct the *Israelites* in their Journies, there might have been more Grounds for asserting, that it was a mere *Machine of human Contrivance*, and had Nothing *miraculous* or *supernatural* in it. But, when it shall appear, that this *Pillar of a Cloud* was of much greater Use to the Children of *Israel*, than barely to conduct them ; that in it resided a superior *Power*, upon whom the Name and Attributes of God are conferr’d ; that from it proceeded *Oracles*, and *Directions* what the People were

(f) Exod. xxxiii. 20. &c. (g) Chap. xxxii. 32.

were to do, and *Plagues* and *Punishments*, when they had done amiss; and that to it are ascrib'd such Motions and Actions, as cannot, with any Propriety of Speech, be apply'd to any *natural Fire*; it will, from hence, I hope, be concluded, that this *Guidance* of the Cloud was a real Miracle; its *Substance* quite different from that of *portable Fire* preceding Armies; and its *Conductor* something more than a mere Man.

THE first Mention, that is made of this *Phænomenon*, is in the thirteenth Chapter of *Exodus*, where *Moses*, describing the *Rout*, which the *Israelites* pursu'd, tells us, that (*b*) they took their Journey from Succoth, and encamp'd at Etham, at the Edge of the Wilderness, and the Lord went before them, by Day, in a Pillar of a Cloud, and, by Night, in a Pillar of Fire: And what we are to understand by the Lord, that went before them, we are advertis'd in another Place; (*i*) Behold I send my Angel before thee, to keep thee in the Way, and to bring thee into the Place, which I have prepar'd: Beware of him, and obey his Voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon thy Transgression, for my Name is in him, i. e. my Name *Jehovah*, which is the proper and incommunicable Title of God. Another Place, wherein we find this Pillar of a Cloud mention'd, is in the 14th Chapter; (*k*) and the Angel of God, which went before the Camp of Israel, removed, and went behind them, and the Pillar of the Cloud went from before their Face, and stood behind them, and it came between the Camp of the Egyptians, and the Camp of Israel, and was a Cloud and Darkness to them, but it gave Light to these. There is, in the same Book, another Place, where this Pillar is taken notice of; and that is, in the 33d Chapter, where God, being highly offended at the People's Impiety in making the *golden Calf*, refuses to conduct them any longer himself, and proposes to depute an Angel to supply his Place: (*l*) When the People heard these evil Tidings, they mourned,——and it came to pass, as Moses entered into the Tabernacle, the cloudy Pillar descended, and stood at the Door of the Tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. All the People saw the cloudy Pillar at the Tabernacle Door, and they rose up, and worshipped every Man at his Tent Door. We have Occasion to mention but one Place more, and that is in the 16th Chapter of *Numbers*, where the People murmur'd for the Loss of

B b 4

Korah,

(*b*) Numb. xxxiii. 5, 6. (*i*) Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. (*k*) Ver. 19, 20. (*l*) Chap. xxxiii. 4, &c.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

Korah, and his Company: (m) And it came to pass, that when the Congregation was gathered against Moses, and against Aaron, they looked towards the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and behold the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord appeared, and Moses and Aaron came before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, get you up from among the Congregation, that I may consume them, as in a Moment, and they fell upon their Faces; and Moses said unto Aaron, take a Censer, and put Fire therein from off the Altar, and put on Incense, and go quickly into the Congregation, and make an Atonement for them, for there is Wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun. Now, from a bare Recital of these Passages, we cannot but observe, that the *Israelites* Pillar made quite another Appearance, than any *combustible* Matter, when set on Fire, and carry'd upon a Pole, can be suppos'd to do; that in this Pillar resided a Person of *divine* Character and Perfections, and therefore call'd *the Lord, the Angel, the Angel of the Lord, and the Angel of his Presence, &c.* that this Person was invest'd with a Power of demanding Homage and Observance, of both punishing and pardoning Transgressions, and to whom, even *Moses* and *Aaron*, (as well as the rest of the Congregation) might fall down on their Faces, and pay Obedience, without the Imputation of *Idolatry*. The whole Tenour of the Narration, in short, seems to denote, that every one in the Congregation look'd upon the Pillar, as something *awful* and *tremendous*, and the Person, residing therein, above the Rank and Dignity of any created Essence: And therefore the most general Opinion is, that he, to whom these divine Appellations, divine Powers, and divine Honours are ascrib'd, was the *eternal Son of God*, with a Troop of blessed Angels attending him in bright and luminous *Forms*; and who, either by the Display, or Contraction of their Forms, cou'd make the Cloud, they inhabited, either *condense*, or *expand* itself, either put on a *dark*, or *radiant* Appearance, according as the great *Captain* of their *Host* signify'd his Pleasure. For to suppose that mere Fire, without any *supernatural* Direction, cou'd appear in different Forms, at the same Time, with *Darkness* to one Sort of People, and *Light* to another, is a Thing incongruous to its Nature.

FOR how many Purposes this *miraculous* Pillar might serve the *Israelites*, it wou'd be Presumption to determine; but

but this we may say with Safety, — That, besides its A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1491, &c. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24. guiding them in their Journey, (*n*) it was of uſe to defend them from their Enemies, that they might not aſſault them: of Uſe to cover them from the Heat of the Sun in the Wilderneſs, where there were few Trees, and no Houſes to ſhelter them; and of Uſe to convey the divine Will, and to be, as it were, a ſtanding *Oracle*, whereunto they might reſort upon all Occaſions. In this Cloud, we are told expreſſly, that (*o*) the *Lord* appear'd from the *Tabernacle*; from this Cloud, that (*p*) he call'd *Aaron* and *Miriam* to come before him; and, out of this Cloud again, that he ſent forth the Expreſſes of his *Wrath*, as well as the Tokens of his *Love*, among the whole Congregation: And therefore this Cloud cou'd, at that Time, be nothing elſe, but the *Vehicle* of God, as we may call it, or the Place of his *majeſtick* Appearance. Nor is the Conjecture improbable, that from this very Inſtance the Poets firſt took the Hint of making their Gods deſcend in a *Cloud*, and array'd with a bright *Effulgency*.

HOWEVER this be, it is certain, that the *Jews* were perſuaded of the Divinity of their Guide; otherwiſe, they wou'd not have expreſs'd ſuch undiſſembled Sorrow and Concern, upon hearing the News of his Intention to leave them: Nor cou'd *Mofes*, with all his Authority, have ever prevail'd with them to wander ſo long in the Wilderneſs, expoſ'd to ſo many Dangers and Hardſhips, had they been ſatisfy'd, that it was no more, than a Man, with ſome Fire, elevated upon a Pole, that was their *Conductor*. It may be allow'd indeed, that a Multitude of ſuch fiery *Machines* might be of Service to an Army in a March; but the Thing is utterly inconceivable, how a Company of *ſix hundred thouſand* Men, beſides Women and Children, and no ſmall Number of *Aſſociates*, together with all their Cattle, cou'd receive any great Benefit from only *one* of theſe, which, at a moderate Diſtance, wou'd diminifh into a ſmall Light, and at a larger be quite loſt; or, every Moment, was in Danger of being blown aſide by the Wind, or extinguiſh'd by the Rain.

THE Scriptures every where represent the *Israelites* going out of *Egypt* with a *high Hand*, marching in a regular Order, and (*q*) covered by God, in the Day, with a *Cloud*, and led, all the Night through, with a *Light of Fire*; but a ſufficient

(*n*) *Patrick's Commentary*. (*o*) Deut. xxxi. 13. (*p*) Numb. xii. 5. (*q*) Pſal. lxxviii. 14, and cv. 39.

A. M. 2513, *Ec.*
Ant. Chris.
1491, *Ec.*
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

a sufficient Company of *Link-Boys*, plac'd in a regular Order to illuminate each Column, as they mov'd, wou'd have certainly been of more Use, and made a much better Appearance, than this pretended Mixture of *Smoak and Flame smothering, from an Iron Pot, at the End of a long Pole.*

For, from my Heart, I cannot conceive, what Manner of Comparison there can be, between the dark, *fuliginous Smoak*, arising from a *culinary Fire*, and the glorious, heavenly, and bright Appearance of (*r*) *that burning Pillar of Fire, which* (as the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* expresses it) *was both a Guide of their unknown Journey, and an harmless Sun to entertain them honourably.*

Why God led
the Israelites
aside, thro'
the Wilder-
ness.

THE Scripture indeed assigns but one Reason for God's conducting the *Israelites* by the Way of the Wilderness, (which was so much about) to the Land of *Canaan*, and that is,——An Apprehension that the *Philistines* (through whose Country they were to go) being a bold and warlike People, wou'd, in all Probability, have disputed the Passage with them, which the others, destitute of Arms, (as they were) and having their Spirits broken with a long Servitude, were in no Condition to make good: But, as the Almighty Power of their *Conductor* was sufficient to make them superior to all such Obstacles, we may well suppose, that a farther End, which the divine Providence might have herein, was to manifest his Glory and Goodness, by his constant Attendance upon them in this *luminous Appearance*, and by the many wonderful Works, which he did, to oblige them to his Service.

ACCORDING to the Course of the Country, *Moses* might have march'd the People a much shorter Way; but then, we had heard nothing of the *Angel of God's Presence* visibly preceding them; nothing of his dividing the Sea to facilitate their Passage; nothing of his overwhelming their Enemies in those very Floods, which to them were a Kind of Wall on each Side; nothing of his drawing out Rivers of Water from the stony Rock; nothing of his (*s*) *sending down Manna upon them, and giving them Food from Heaven*; nothing of his raining *Flesh, as thick as Dust, and feathered Fowls, like as the Sand of the Sea*; nothing of his amazing Descent upon Mount *Sinai*, when, in the lofty Words of the *Psalmist*, (*t*) *he bowed the Heavens, and came down, and it was dark under his Feet; he rode upon the Cherubims,*
and

(*r*) *Wisd.* xviii. 3.
xviii. 9, *Ec.*

(*s*) *Psal.* lxxviii. 24, *Ec.*

(*t*) *Psal.*

and did fly ; he came flying upon the Wings of the Wind ; he made Darknefs his ſecret Place, his Pavilion round about him with dark Water, and thick Clouds to cover him : There went a Smoak out of his Preſence, Hail-ftones, and Coals of Fire, ſo that the Earth trembled and quak'd, the very Foundations alſo of the Hills ſhook, and were removed. The Wilderneſs, in ſhort, was the Scene, which God had made choice of, for the Diſplay of his Almighty Power and Goodneſs : There it was, that he laid bare his Arm, as he calls it, to the *Israelites* ; that, every Day, he took care of their Meat, and Drink, and Indeficiency of their Cloathing ; and had he not detain'd them there ſo long, he had not been ſo kind. It may be conſider'd farther, that, before this People were to be admitted into the Poſſeſſion of the Inheritance, which God had promis'd them, all Matters were to be adjusted between him and them ; and, to this Purpoſe, *Laws* were to be given, *Ordinances* inſtituted, and *Covenants* ſeal'd ; but a Work of this Importance cou'd no where be ſo commodiouſly tranſacted, as in the Retirement of the Wilderneſs. Here it was, that God, in the Buſh, talking with *Mofes*, gave it as a Token of his Promiſe, that the People, after their Deliverance, ſhou'd come to *Mount Horeb*, and (*u*) there worſhip him ; and fit it was, that ſuch an Engagement on God's Part ſhou'd now receive its Accompliſhment. And, ſince it was no more than requiſite, that a Nation, deſign'd for ſuch peculiar Favours from God, ſhou'd be held ſome Time in a State of Probation, before they were admitted to it, and until the People, whom they were appointed to reject, had fill'd up the *Measure of their Iniquity*, and were ripe for Extirpation ; therefore it is, that *Mofes* calls upon them (*x*) to remember all the Way, which the Lord their God led them, for theſe forty Years in the Wilderneſs, to humble them, and to prove them, and to know what was in their Hearts, whether they would keep his Commandments or no.

THESE Commandments, it muſt be own'd, were deliver'd to the *Israelites* with all the Enſigns of Horror, which the *Pſalmiſt*, ſo lately quoted, has deſcrib'd ; but that there is no Ground to ſuſpect any Deceit in this wonderful Occurrence, is manifeſt from *Mofes's* Dealing ſo openly with the People in this Matter, and ſuffering them to go up into the Mountain, after the Lord had departed from it.

When

- (*u*) Exod. iii. 12.

(*x*) Deut. viii. 2.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

No Colluſion
in the
Mount,
whence God
gave his
Laws.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chris. 1491, &c. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

(y) *When the Trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the Mount.* This is the *Signal*, which God himself gives them; whereas, had there been any Fallacy in the *Phænomenon*, *Moses* wou'd have debarr'd them from going up for ever. And therefore, as we need not doubt, but that several, upon this *Signal*, went up; we cannot but think, that the Cheat wou'd have soon been discover'd, had there been any Marks of a *natural Irruption* of Fire discernible upon the Top of the Mountain.

Those who give us an Account of *Vulcanos*, or burning Mountains, do all agree in this, (as the Nature of the Thing indeed seems to require it) (z) that, on their Tops, they have always an open *Mouth*, (which the Antients call'd *Crater*) through which they belch out their Flames; and that, after the Fire is expended, it will still appear in the Form of a monstrous *Gap*, even unto the End of the World. And therefore, since all *Travellers*, both antient and modern, who have taken an accurate Survey * of the Mount *Sinai*,

(y) Exod. xix. 13. (z) *Nicholls's Conference*, Part II. p. 279.

* The Mountains of *Sinai* and *Horeb* are promiscuously us'd by the sacred *Historian*, by Reason of their Contiguity; and yet it is certain, that they are two different Places. *Sinai*, (which the *Arabians*, at this Day, call *Tor*, or the *Mountain*, by way of Eminence, or otherwise, *Gibel Mousa*, the *Mount of Moses*) stands in a Kind of *Peninsula*, form'd by two Arms of the *Red-Sea*, one of which stretches out towards the *North*, and is call'd the *Gulph of Kolsom*; the other towards the *East*, and is call'd the *Gulph of Elan*, or the *Elanitish-Sea*. *Sinai* is, at least, one third Part higher than *Horeb*, and of a much more difficult Ascent; whose Top terminates in an uneven and rugged Space, capable of containing about 60 Persons. Here (as we said) is built the little Chapel of St. *Catharine*, where it is thought that the Body of this Saint rested for 330 Years, but was afterwards removed to the Church, which is at the Foot of the Mountain. Not far from this Chapel issues out a Fountain of good fresh Water, which is look'd upon as miraculous, because it is not conceivable, how Water can rise from the Brow of so high a Mountain. *Horeb* is to the *West* of *Sinai*, so that at Sun-rising the Shadow of *Sinai* entirely covers *Horeb*. At the Foot of this Mount there is a Fountain, which supplies Water to the Monastery of St. *Catharine*; and about five or six Paces from it, they shew us a *Stone*, about four or five Feet high, and three broad, which, as they tell us, is the very same, from whence *Moses* caus'd the Waters to gush out. It is of a spotted grey Colour,

Sinai, cou'd never discern the least Appearance of any such A. M. Gap, but, on the contrary, a continu'd Surface, whereon ^{2513, &c.} there stands, at present, a little Chapel of *St. Catharine*; ^{Ant. Christ.} all this suppos'd Contrivance of *Moses*, to make a natural ^{1491, &c.} *Vulcano* pass upon the People for the *majestick Presence* of ^{xiii. to Chap.} God upon the sacred Mount, can be deem'd no other than ^{xxxiv. 24.} a crude, nonsensical Fiction, wherein the Lovers of Infidelity are found to shew their Ignorance, as well as their Malice, when they pretend to tax this Relation of *Moses*, representing God's Appearance in a Flame of Fire, in Thunder, and Lightening, &c. with any Incongruity, or invent any groundless Stories to account for it; since Nothing can be more agreeable to the antient *Divinity*, or common Notions of the *Heathen World*, * than that the Apparition of their Gods, whenever they descend upon the Earth, is usually attended with such like Harbingers.

SUNDRY *Law-givers*, no doubt, have pretended to a *No Incon-* Familiarity with their respective Deities, as well as *Moses* did *gruity in* with the God of *Israel*; but, (besides the Attestation of *these Lawgivers*) *Miracles*.

four, stands by itself, as it were, and where no other Rock appears, and has twelve Holes about a Foot wide, from whence it is thought that the Water came forth, which the *Israelites* did drink. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Sinai*.

* That Fire and Lightning shou'd attend the Presence of God, is a Notion so frequent in the most antient and oriental *Theology*, that it might possibly give Occasion to the Worship of *Fire* among the *Chaldeans* and *Persians*: to the *Magi*, among the *Cappadocians* call'd *Purrethi*, which *Strabo* mentions, and to the *Vestal Fires* among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, as well as antient *Britons*.

Ἡνίκα βλέψης μορφῆς ἄτερ ἐνιερὸν πῦρ
 Λαμπόμενον σκισηδὸν ὅλα κατὰ βένθεα Κόσμου
 Κλῦθι πυρὸς φωνήν.

Say the *Chaldaic* Oracles: And as for *Earth-quakes*, or Shaking of Mountains, this is no more, than what all Nations suppose have ever come to pass, upon God's manifesting himself at any Time; for it is not only the *Psalmist*, who tells us, that the *Earth shook*, and the *Heaven dropped at the Presence of God*; but in the Description, which *Virgil* gives us of the Approach of *Phæbus*, he does, in a Manner, translate the Words of *Moses*.

———— Tremere omnia visâ repente,
 Luminaque, Laurusque Dei; totusque moveri
 Mons circum, & mugire Adytis Cortina reclusis.

Vide *Nicholls's* Conference, Part II.

A. M. *Miracles* in his Favour, which none of them laid any Claim to) we may venture to put his Character upon this Issue, viz. the Excellency of his Laws, above what *Athens*, or *Lacedemon*, or even *Rome* itself ever had to produce. For, what a compleat System of all religious and social Virtues do the *Ten Commandments*, deliver'd on the Mount, contain, taking them (as we ought to do) in their *positive*, as well as *negative* Sense! In the *second* of these indeed, there is a Passage, of *God's visiting the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children*, which seems to bear a little hard upon his Mercy and Justice; but this is entirely owing to the Mistake of our Translation. For, if the Preposition *Lamed*, and *Hal*, which we there render *upon*, may, (a) according to the Sense of some *Criticks*, be render'd *by*, or *in favour of*, then may the Words, now under Consideration, be properly translated, *God's punishing the Wickedness of the Father*, BY OR IN FAVOUR of the Children. In the former of these Senses, (b) *David's* Murther and Adultery was justly punish'd by his favourite, but wicked Son *Absalom*; and, in the latter, the meaning will be, that God frequently inflicts remarkable Judgments upon a wicked Father, in order to deter his Children, even to the *third and fourth Generation*, from the like Provocations.

Nor in the
Appointment
of Cities of
Refuge.

WHAT more just, as well as merciful Constitution cou'd there be devis'd, than to ordain *Cities of Refuge*, for the innocent *Man-slayer* to fly to, thereby to avoid the Rage and ungovernable Fury of the dead Man's *Relations*, (who, according to the Custom of these Times, were wont immediately to revenge their Kindred's Death) and thereby to gain Time to prepare a Plea in his own Vindication; which, if it was found insufficient, and the Man adjudg'd guilty of *wilful Murther*, cou'd not, according to the Tenor of the same Law, secure him from being dragg'd even (c) *from the Horns of the Altar*?

AN Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth, may seem to us, who live under a milder Dispensation, a rigid and severe Decree; but then we may observe, that it was no more, than what was thought reasonable in other Nations, and obtain'd a Place among * the celebrated *Roman*

(a) *Le Clerc's* Commentary in Locum. (b) 2 Sam. xi. and some following Chapters. (c) Exod. xxi. 14.

* *Aulus Gellius* sets down this Law of the *twelve Tables* in this Manner. SI MEMBRUM RUPERIT. NI. CUM. EO. PACIT. TALIO. ESTO. *Not. Attic. Lib. xx. c. 1.*

man Laws of the *twelve Tables*. It was, in some Measure, necessary to restrain quarrelsome and unruly Tempers from Violence ; and, in Case that Death did not ensue, the Law was always mitigated, and the *Talio* commuted for a *pecuniary* Mult. A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chris. 1491, &c. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

SEVERAL of the *Jewish* Laws, which to us may seem frivolous, had a valid Reason for their Institution at first, if it were but to discriminate them from other Nations, and to guard them against the common Infection of Idolatry. The Wearing of *Linsey-woolsey* was probably a proud, fantastical Fashion of the *Heathens* at that Time, which the *Jews* were forbid to imitate. An *Ox* and an *Ass* were not to be coupled together in the same Carriage, with this merciful Intent, that one Beast of greater Strength might not strain a poor Creature of less beyond its Ability ; and, as Sowing the Ground with *mix'd Seeds*, in some Men's Opinion, is an effectual Way to wear it out, it was therefore a Practice prohibited, in Commiseration (if I may so say) to our Mother Earth, as well as to set Bounds to the Husband-man's Covetousness ; though, as others imagine, these three Injunctions, as they stand all together in the same Place, might perhaps have something emblematical in them, besides the Precept, to make Men have a greater Abhorrence of all *venereal* Mixtures, contrary to Nature. Valid Reason for seemingly frivolous Laws.

IT is an Injunction, which God often inculcates to his People the *Jews*, (*d*) *After the Doing of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, ye shall not do ; and after the Doing of the Land of Canaan, whither I bring you, ye shall not do : I am the Lord your God, ye shall therefore keep my Statutes, and my Judgments ;* which Words seem to imply, not only that the idolatrous Rites of the *Gentiles* were forbidden, but that those of God's Appointment were made in direct Opposition to them : And to this Purpose we find (*e*) the Roman Historian representing the *Jews*, as a People, whose religious Rites were so contrary to all the World besides, that what, in others, was most sacred, they accounted profane, and allow'd, as lawful, what other Nations were wont to abominate. No Resemblance between the Egyptian and Jewish Ceremonies.

Now, if the *Mosaick* Laws and Ceremonies were given to the *Jews*, as Barriers against Idolatry, and formally repugnant to the Customs of the *Heathens*, we may appeal to any sober and considerate Man, whether it be consistent with good Sense, or congruous to Truth and Reason, that

God

(*d*) Lev. xviii. 3, 4.

(*e*) Tacitus, l. viii. c. 4.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

God shou'd make Laws, exactly contrary to the *Egyptians*, and other *Pagan Nations*, shewing thereby, that he hated the very Semblance of their Rites, and yet, at the same Time, take the *Rise* of his Institutions from the Customs and Practice of these *Pagans*: Nay, whether it gives us not such an Idea of God, as Reverence to his tremendous Majesty will not suffer me to name, (*f*) to represent him making up all the vain, ludicrous, superstitious, impious, impure, idolatrous, magical, and diabolical Customs, which had been first invented, and afterwards practis'd, by the most barbarous Nations, and out of these patching up a great Part of the Religion, which he appointed his own People.

It cannot well otherwise be, but that, in Matters of *Tradition*, which have equally descended among all Nations perhaps from *Noah*, a Man of some Learning and Fancy may form a Similitude between the religious *Rites* and *Usages* of one People with another; but it wou'd really rack one's Invention to find out the great Agreement between the *Jewish* High-Priest, and the *Egyptian* Chief Justice; since the *Urim* and *Thummim* of the one was a *Piece of Cloth*, about a Span square, beset with Jewels, but the *Alathea*, (as they call it) of the other, was a *golden Medal*, representing the Figure of a Bird; since the Robe of the one was made of scarlet, blue, and purple woollen Cloth, only embroider'd with Wreaths of fine Linnen; but the Garment of the other was made of Linnen only, because it was unlawful, (*g*) as *Herodotus* tells us, for the *Egyptian* Magistrates to wear any Thing else.

WHEN the *Tables of the Covenant* were deliver'd to *Moses*, it seems no more than requisite, that some Care shou'd be taken of them; and, if so, what cou'd be a more apposite Contrivance for that Purpose than a *Chest*? *Moses*, even by his Enemies, is reputed a very cunning Man; but they certainly mean it as a Compliment, and not his Due, if they think him not capable of so small a Contrivance as this, without copying from the *Egyptian Cista*, wherein the Priests were wont to lock up their religious *Trinkets* from the Eyes of the Vulgar: And as for the *Cherubims*, which over-shadow'd this *Ark*, there certainly seems nothing *analogous*, but rather a particular Opposition in these to the *Egyptian* Idolatry. For, whereas their

(*f*) *Edwards's Survey of Religion*, Vol. I. (g) Lib. ii.
c. 37.

their Temples were generally fill'd with the Images of A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c. From Exod. xliii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24. Monkeys, Calves, and Serpents, the Representations of real Animals, which, (according to the natural *Deiſm* of thoſe Times) they fancy'd to be Parts and Exhibitions of the Deity; *Moses* here † orders Figures to be made, which had little or no Reſemblance of any Thing in the World, and were expreſſive of the *angelical* Nature only, which every one knew was *ſubordinate* to God's. So little Congruity is there to be found between the *Egyptian* and *Jewiſh* Laws and Ceremonies, * leſs perhaps, than might be diſcover'd in ſeveral other Nations, were we diſpos'd to be prolix upon this Subject. But let us return to their *Legiſlator*.

THAT

† What the particular Figure of theſe *Cherubims* was, it is hard to imagine at this Diſtance. *Grotius* indeed, and ſome others, have ingeniouſly conjectur'd, from the Creatures ſeen by *Ezekiel* in his Viſion, *Chap.* i. 5. and x. 15. which he calls *Cherubim*, that they had the Face of a *Man*, the Wings of an *Eagle*, the Mane of a *Lion*, and the Feet of an *Ox*; and by this they will have the Diſpenſations of divine Providence, by the Miniſtry of Angels, *ſymbolically* repreſented; the *Lion* exhibiting the Severity of his *Juſtice*; the *Eagle*, the Celerity of his *Bounty*; the *Man*, his *Goodneſs* and *Mercy*; and the *Ox*, the Slowneſs of his *Puniſhment*, which comes (as the *Greek Proverb* ſays) *βοὺς ποδὶ*, with an *Ox's Foot*. *Nicholl's Conference*, Part II.

* To this Purpose, we are inform'd that the *Brachmans*, the *Indian* Priests, wear Bells about them like the *Jewiſh* High-Priest, were only allow'd to go into the inward Part of the Temple, and were like him oblig'd to marry Virgins. *Slaves* there have their Ears bor'd through; a perpetual *Light* is kept in their Temples, and *Cakes* are ſet before their Idols, like *Shew-Bread*. Nay, even the barbarous *Tartars* have many Things not unlike the *Jews*, for they celebrate their New Moons with Songs and Compotations; they bewail their Dead thirty Days; they breed no Hogs, and puniſh Adultery with Death. The like may be ſaid of the People of the New World. Thoſe of *Jucatan* are circumciſ'd; thoſe of *Mexico* keep a perpetual Fire in their Temples; and the *Charibbeans* celebrate the New Moon with the Sound of a Trumpet, and abſtain from Swine's Fleſh: And therefore, if a Similitude in Ceremonies is admitted as a valid Argument, we may as well ſay, that the *Jews* had their Laws and religious Ordinances from any of theſe, as that they had them from the *Egyptians*. *Nicholl's Conference*, Part II.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

Moses's Ex-
pression con-
cerning God
vindicated.

THAT God, who is a pure Spirit, eternal, and omnipresent, has neither Body nor Parts, nor any Affections thereunto belonging, is a Proposition, which our Reason cannot but assent to; and yet, when we set ourselves to *explain* (as we call it) the Divine Nature and Attributes, we soon find ourselves under a Necessity to borrow Expressions from *corporeal* Beings, the better to accommodate the Loftiness of our Subject to our Readers Comprehension. For, unless we cou'd contrive a perfect Set of *new* Words, there is no speaking at all of the Deity without using our *old* ones in a *tralatitious* Sense. *Providence* and *Mercy*, for Instance, are two known Attributes of God; but, if we respect their *original* Use, and do not take them in a *metaphorical* Meaning, they are altogether as absurd, when apply'd to God, as are his *Eye*, or *Hand*, or *Back-parts*, in their grossest Sense. For, how improper is it, literally speaking, to say, that God *looks before him*, like Men when they act cautiously; or, that he has that *relenting of Heart*, or *yearning of Bowels*, which merciful Men feel at the Sight of a miserable Object? The Truth is, Languages were compos'd to maintain an Intercourse with one another, and not to treat of the Nature of that Being, who *dwelleth in Light that is inaccessible*. No Form of Words, be they never so exquisite and well chosen, can reach those transcendent Perfections, that are *unutterable*; and therefore, if we consider the low Capacity of the People, to whom, the great Poverty of the Language, in which, and the vast Sublimity of the Subject, about which *Moses* wrote, we shall have less Occasion to blame this *metaphorical* Way of expressing the Divine Nature, which, upon Experiment, he certainly found best adapted, both to inform the Understanding, and animate the Affections of the People; while a Number of dry, *scholastick*, and abstracted Terms wou'd have laid flat upon their Minds, and serv'd only to amuse, and confound them.

THO', therefore, it must be acknowledg'd, that there is indeed an Impropriety in Language, when corporeal Parts, or Actions are imputed to the Deity; yet, since the Narrowness of the *Hebrew* Tongue wou'd not furnish *Moses* with a Sufficiency of abstract Terms, and the Dullness of the People (had he had a Sufficiency) would not have permitted him to employ them; he was under a Necessity of speaking according to the *common Usage*, which was secur'd from giving the People any gross Ideas of God, be-

cause

cause these Phrases were always understood to be spoken A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chris. 1491, &c. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.
ἀνθρωποπαθῶς; and therefore (b) a Jewish Rabbī acquaints us, that whenever they meet with an Expression concerning the Deity of this Nature, they are us'd to interpose a *Cabiacal*, or, *if I may so speak*.

INTERPRETERS, indeed, are at some Variance what we are to understand by the *Hand*, *Face*, and *Hinder-Parts* of God. "The *Face of God*, (i) *says an ingenious Glossary*, signifies his Essence, before the Beginning of the "World, and his *Hinder-Parts*, his Creation and Providence, in the Government of the World:" But (k) *Maimonides* is of Opinion, that these Words may be interpreted according to the *Targum*, viz. That God made his *Majesty*, i. e. an exceedingly bright Representation of himself, (though not in its full Glory) pass before *Moses*, in so much Splendor, as human Nature cou'd bear, which may be term'd his *Back-Parts*; but not in his unveil'd *Brightness*, which may signify his *Face*, and, (as the Apostle speaks) is *inaccessible*; and (l) the *Hand*, wherewith God cover'd him, while he *passed by*, may probably denote a *Cloud*, which God cast about him, that he might not be struck dead by the inconceivable Force and Refulgency of those Rays, which came from the *Face*, or full Lustre of the divine Majesty.

IN this Sense the antient *Jews* cou'd not but understand their Legislator, when they found him conveying sublime Truths under outward and sensible Representations. For, to clear him from all unjust Imputation, we need but call to mind the glorious Descriptions he gives, almost every where, but especially in *Deuteronomy*, of the Deity, and what Pains he takes, to deter them from making any Representation of it, under any Form whatever, by reminding them, that when God was pleas'd to display his Glory upon Mount *Sinai*, at the Delivering of the Ten Commandments, they saw no Shape or Likeness, but only heard his dreadful Voice. (m) These so frequent Inculcations may therefore be look'd upon as so many Intimations given them, in what Sense they were to understand all those other Expressions, which he had been forc'd to accommodate to their Capacity, i. e. not in a *literal*, but in such a one, as was becoming the Deity, and suitable to the Dignity of the Subject.

C c 2

MOSES,

(b) Quoted by *Hottinger* in his Dissert. Theolog. Philol.

(i) *Elias Cretensis*. (k) *More Nechoh*, Part I. c. 21.

(l) *Patrick's Commentary*, on Exod. xxxiii.

(m) *Universal*

Hist. Lib. i. c. 7.

A. M. *MOSES*, no doubt, was a good Governor, and zealously affected for the Welfare of his People; but we injure his Memory much, if we think him, either so ignorant of a future State, or so negligent of his own Salvation, as to wish himself *damn'd*, in his Deprecation of God's Judgments, for their Salvation. The Case is this.—The Israelites, in making a golden Calf to worship, had highly offended God: God renounces all relation to them, and, in his Displeasure, threatens, either to abandon, or destroy them; whereupon *Moses* intercedes for their Pardon, and, among other Motives, makes use of this; (n) *Oh, my God, this People have sinned a great Sin, and have made them Gods of Gold; yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their Sins; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the Book, which thou hast written:* (o) Not that God stands in need of a Book, wherein to register or record any of his Purposes: * but the Scripture makes use of this Form of Expression, in Allusion to the Custom of numbering the People, and setting down their Names in a Scroll, or Register, (p) as *Moses* did, at their coming out of the Land of Egypt. The same Method was likewise observ'd at the Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, as may be seen in the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; and those, who were inroll'd

2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

And concerning himself, justify'd.

(n) Exod. xxxii. 32. (o) *Patrick's* Commentary in Locum.

* To this Purpose the Royal *Psalmist*, in Relation to his own Formation in the Womb, bespeaks God, and says, *Thine Eyes did see my Substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy Book were all my Members written*; as if God kept a Catalogue of the Children that were born, *Psal. cxxxix. 16*. And again, speaking of wicked Men, he says, *let them be wiped out of the Book of the Living, and not be written among the Righteous*, *Psal. lxxix. 28*. Nor is this Form of Speech to be found only among sacred Writers, but even *Plautus* himself, having occasion, in one of his *Prologues*, to take some Notice of the divine Providence, makes use of these Words.

Qui falsas Lites falsis Testimoniis
Petunt, quique in Jure abjurant pecuniam,
Eorum referimus nomina exscripta ad Jovem.
Quotidie ille scit, quis hic quærit malum,
Qui hic litem apisci postulent Injuriam
Mali, Res falsas qui impetrant apud Judicem:
Bonos in aliis Tabulis exscriptos habet:

Le Clerc's Comment. ad Exod. c. xxxii.

(p) Numb. 1.

inroll'd in this Book, are said, (q) *to be written for Life*, A. M. 2513, &c.
 or *among the Living*, because, every Year, they blotted out of this Catalogue the Names of those that were dead. Ant. Christ. 1491, &c.

ACCORDING to this Construction of the Phrase, (and From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.) this is certainly the true Construction) *Moses* can by no Means be suppos'd to wish his own Damnation, which wou'd look like an *enthusiastick* Rant, rather than divine Inspiration ; which wou'd be impious for him to ask, and unrighteous for God to do ; but only that, “ rather
 “ than live to see the Calamities, which wou'd befall the
 “ People, in Case God shou'd either desert or destroy
 “ them, he desires to be discharg'd from Life, that so
 “ he may escape the Shock of so woeful, so terrible a
 “ Spectacle.”

IN a former Communion with God, wherein he threatens either to extirpate or disinherit his People, he promises *Moses* to (r) *make of him a greater Nation, and mightier than they* ; but, instead of that, *Moses* here desires to die with them ; and, as a learned Father of the Church observes, “ (s) there is a great deal of pious Art and Policy in the
 “ Petition, or Proposal (as we may call it) which this
 “ great Favourite and Confident of God offers to him. He
 “ does not make it at all Adventures, as one less acquainted
 “ with the divine Mind might do ; nor does he make it out
 “ of a Slight and Contempt of Life, as one whose Circum-
 “ stances had brought him into Despair might do. He
 “ knew God's Goodness was infinite, as well as his Justice ;
 “ so that, in this Alternative, *either be thou pleased to slay*
 “ *me and them together, or to spare them and me together*,
 “ he was sensible he shou'd engage God's Mercy to par-
 “ don the *Criminals*, whilst, on their Behalf, he devoted
 “ himself at the same Time to that Justice, which can-
 “ not be suppos'd capable of hurting the *Innocent*.”

ONE great Commendation, which we have frequently remark'd of the Author of the *Pentateuch* above any other Historian, is, that he consults *Truth*, more than *Plausibility* in his Narrations, and conceals no material Point, even though it tends to the Dishonour of the People, whose Actions he is recording. *Josephus* wrote the *Jewish History* of these Times, as well as *Moses* ; and yet, when he comes to the proper Period, he quite conceals their blind Idolatry in worshipping the *golden Calf* : Whereas *Moses* relates it

(q) *Isaiah* iv. 3.
Epist. xxi.

(r) *Numb.* xiv. 12.

(s) *Paulia.*

A. M. in all its aggravating Circumstances, and seems to fix, in a
 2513, &c. Manner, the whole Odium of it upon his Brother *Aaron*.
 Ant. Chris. And therefore to inform ourselves how far *Aaron* was culpa-
 1491, &c. ble in this Particular, we must attend a little to the probable
 From Exod. Occasion of it.
 xliii. to Chap.
 xxxiv. 24.

How Aaron ed *Aaron* and *Hur* to be the Rulers of the People in his
 was induc'd Absence; but, as his Absence prov'd longer than was ex-
 to make the pected, the People began to be uneasy. They saw the
 People an I- *Glory of the Lord, which was like a devouring Fire on the*
 dol. *Top of the Mount*, and thereupon they concluded that *Moses*,
 who tarry'd so long, was certainly destroy'd in the Flames.
 They saw too, that the *Pillar of the Cloud*, which us'd to
 conduct them in their Marches, was gone, and in no Like-
 lihood of returning again; and hereupon, having lost their
Guide, and the visible Token of God's Presence among
 them, they came unto *Aaron*, and, in a tumultuous Man-
 ner, demanded of him to make them another Representa-
 tion of the Divine Presence, in the Room of what was
 departed from them. (t) *Up*, say they, and make us Gods,
 or, (as the *Hebrew Text* will bear †) *make us a God which*
shall go before us. (u) Not that they were so stupid, as to
 imagine, that the true God cou'd be made by any Man, or
 that any Image cou'd be a Means of conducting them, ei-
 ther forward into *Canaan*, or back again into *Egypt*; but
 what they wanted, was some outward Object to supply the
 Want of the *Cloud*, by being a Type and Symbol of the
 Deity, and where they might depose the Homage, which they
 intended to pay to the supreme God; for so some of the *Jew-*
ish Doctors have expounded the Text of *Moses*: (x) *They*
desired

(t) Exod. xxxii. 1.

† It has been argu'd by some learned Men, that the *Israe-*
lites intended here to fall entirely into the *Egyptian* Religion, and
 that the Deity, they made the Calf to, was some God of the
Egyptians; but to me, this seems not to be the Fact. In this
 Calf, the *Israelites* evidently design'd to worship the God, who
 brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and accordingly their
 Feast was proclaim'd not to any *Egyptian* Deity, but to the
 Lord, to *JEHOVAH*, their own God, Exod. xxxii. 4. So that
 their Idolatry consisted not in really worshipping a false Deity,
 but in making an Image to the true and living God, which the
 Second Commandment expressly did forbid. *Shuckford's* Con-
 nection, Vol. III. Lib. 11.

(u) *Saurin's* Dissertations. (x) *R. Jebudab*, in Lib. *Cozri*,
 Part I. Sect. 97.

desired a sensible Object of Divine Worship to be set before them, not with an Intention to deny God, who brought them out of Egypt, but that Something, in the Place of God, might stand before them, when they declared his wonderful Works.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

THE Commandment against making Images had so lately, in so terrible a Manner, been enjoin'd by God himself, that though some Reason may be given why the Children of *Israel* were so forward to make the Demand, yet none can be imagin'd, why *Aaron* shou'd comply with it, without making any Remonstrance, and yet we meet with no Refusal recorded by *Moses*. All that we have in Extenuation of *Aaron's* Fault, is from the Suggestion of the *Rabbins*, who pretended that his Compliance proceeded from his Fear; that the People had † murder'd *Hur* the other Deputy, for opposing their Desire; that, to discourage them from pursuing their Design, *Aaron* demanded all their golden *Earrings*, in Hopes that they wou'd not insist upon having an Idol, which would cost them so dear; but that, when Nothing wou'd avail, he took their Gold, and cast it into the Fire, and, contrary to his Intention, by some *magical* or *diabolical* Art, there immediately came out a *Calf*, which much increas'd the People's Superstition. But this, and Abundance more of the like Nature, seem to be Conceits, invented for the Excuse of *Aaron*, who is plainly enough said to have (y) *made this molten Calf*, which he cou'd not have done, without designing it, and running the Gold into a Mould of that Figure.

THE Word, which we here render *Calf*, (z) does, in other Places of Scripture, signify an *Ox*: And, as an Ox's Head was, in some Countries, an Emblem of Strength, and the Horns a common Sign of kingly Power; so (a) a learned

And why it
was a Calf.

C c 4

† What Authority they had for these Assertions, I cannot say; but if what they offer be true, this does not at all prove *Aaron* to be innocent; because no Obstinacy of the People cou'd have forc'd him without his own Fault, and he shou'd have been willing, and adventur'd to die, rather than, by a timorous Compliance, have made himself Partaker of their Sins.

Justum & tenacem propositi virum,
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis Tyranni

Mente quatit solidâ, &c. HOR. CAR. LIB. III. OD. III.

(y) Exod. xxxii. 35. (z) Psal. cvi. 20. (a) Patrick in his Comment. in Locum.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xlii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

ned *Prelate*, out of a Design to apologize for *Aaron*, is willing to insinuate, that his Design, in making an *Ox* the Symbol of the divine Presence, was to remind the *Israelites* of the Power of God, and to express the great Tokens, which they had seen of it, in their wonderful Deliverance. But how ingenious soever this *Hypothesis* may be, it wants this Foundation for its Support, that this *Hieroglyphic* of the divine Power was not in Use in the Time of *Moses*; for if it was, we cannot imagine, why *Aaron*, when called to an Account by his Brother, shou'd forget to plead it in Excuse for himself; or why God shou'd be so highly incens'd against him, had his Design been only to exhibit a *Symbol* of the divine Power and Authority to a People of too gross Sentiments, without such a visible Representation, ever to comprehend it.

ANOTHER learned *Prelate* of our own, (b) equally inclined to excuse this Action of *Aaron*, supposes that he took his Pattern from Part of what he saw on the holy Mount, when the *Shechinah* of God came down upon it, attended with Angels, some of which were *Cherubims*, or Angels appearing in the Form of Oxen: But this Opinion is inconsistent with the great Care, which was taken on Mount *Sinai*, not to furnish any Pretext for Idolatry, and the Caution which *Moses* gives the People to that Purpose. (c) *Take ye therefore good Heed to yourselves (for ye saw no Manner of Similitude, on the Day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the Fire) lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven Image, the Similitude of any Figure, the Likeness of any Male or Female, the Likeness of any Beast that is on the Earth; the Likeness of any winged Fowl, that flieth in the Air; the Likeness of any Thing that creepeth on the Ground; the Likeness of any Fish, &c.* where the Holy Spirit enumerates Animals of all Kinds, and positively assures us, that none of their Forms or Figures appear'd upon the Mount.

THE most common therefore, and indeed the most probable Opinion is, that *Aaron* made Choice of the Figure of an *Ox*, or *Calf*, in Compliance to the Prejudice of the *People*, and because that Creature was worshipp'd in *Egypt*. That the *Israelites* were sorely infected with the Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, we have many plain Proofs (d) from Scripture

(b) *Tennison* of Idolatry, c. 6. (c) Deut. iv. 15, &c.
(d) Vid. Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7, 8. and Chap. xxii. 3, 8.

ture to convince us ; that all Sorts of Animals were wor-
 shipp'd by the *Egyptians*, and, among the *Terrestrial*, more
 especially the Ox, is what (e) the several Authors, who have
 treated of the Affairs of *Egypt*, do abundantly testify ; and
 that the Idolatry of *Animals*, and more especially of the
Ox, was establish'd in *Egypt*, during the Sojourning of the
Israelites in that Land, is more than probable from these
 Words of *Moses* to *Pharaoh* ; (f) *if we sacrifice the Abo-*
mination of the Egyptians before their Eyes, i. e. if we sa-
 crifice to our God Oxen, Sheep, and Goats, which the *E-*
gyptians worship and adore, and consequently make an Abo-
 mination to the Lord, *will they not stone us* ? So that it
 seems most rational to suppose, that this Image was made in
 Compliance to the giddy Humour of the People, who,
 upon the suppos'd Death of *Moses*, were probably all for
 returning back again, and, in Imitation of the *Egyptians*,
 who worshipp'd their Idol *Apis*, or *Serapis*, not only in a
living Ox, but in an Image made after the Similitude of
 an Ox, bethought themselves of the like Representation of
 a Deity to go before them : The only Question is, whether
 the Worship of the *Egyptian Apis* was prior to the Forma-
 tion of this *golden Calf*, which happens to be a Point,
 wherein (g) the Learned are not so well agreed.

THUS we have endeavour'd to give a full Answer to se-
 veral Objections, which have been rais'd against the sacred
 Historian during the Period, which is at present under Con-
 sideration : And, for a farther Confirmation hereof, we
 might now produce some foreign Testimonies and Tradi-
 tions concerning the Truth and Veracity of his Narrations.
 That the miraculous Pillar, *for Instance*, which conducted
 the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, very probably gave Rise to
 the antient Fables, (h) how *Hercules* and *Bacchus* (who,
 under different Shapes, are both suppos'd to denote *Moses*)
 set up *Pillars*, in Testimony of their Travels and Expedi-
 tions : That the *Israelites* safe Passage over the *Red-Sea*,
 upon its being divided by the Rod of *Moses*, and the Tra-
 dition, which the People of *Memphis* have thereupon, are
 related by *Antiphanes*, as he is quoted (i) by *Eusebius* :
 That, upon the Return and Conflux of the Waters, the
 Armies,

A. M.
 2513, &c.
 Ant. Christ.
 1491, &c.
 From Exod.
 xiii. to Chap.
 xxxiv. 24.

(e) Vid. *Strabo*, Lib. 17. de *Ægyptiacis Templis*. *Herod.*
 Lib. 2. *Diod.* Lib. 1. & *Plutar.* de *Iside & Osiride*. (f) *Exod.*
 viii. 26. (g) Vid. *Ger. Vos.* de *Idolat.* c. 9. *Bochart*, *Hieros.*
 Part I. Lib. 2. and *Tennison* of *Idolatry*. (h) *Huetius*, *Quæst.*
Alnet. Lib. 2. (i) *Præpar. Evang.* Lib. 9.

A. M. Armies, which pursu'd them, were swallow'd up in the
 2513, &c. Deep, is mentioned (*k*) by *Diodorus*, as a current Story
 Ant. Christ. among the People inhabiting the western Coast of the Red-
 1491, &c. Sea : That, on this Coast there are several Lakes and Springs
 From Exod. of a salt and brackish Taste, in the Manner that *Moses* has
 xliii. to Chap. recorded, and no such Thing found on the other Side of the
 xxxiv. 24. Sea, is testify'd (*l*) by *Orosius*, as well as several antient
 Geographers : That God's sending down *Manna*, for Bread,
 to the *Israelites*, and great Plenty of *Quails*, for Meat, is
 mention'd by *Antiphanus*, as he is cited again (*m*) by *Euse-
 bius* : That, from *Moses's* striking the Rock with his Rod,
 the Fable of *Bacchus's* doing the same with his *Thyrus*, in
 order to extract Water for the Relief of the Virgin *Aura*,
 had its Original : And (to name no more) that, from *Mo-
 ses's* receiving the Law on Mount *Sinai*, most of the Law-
 givers of other Nations took the Hint to borrow their Insti-
 tutions from some God, or Goddess, or other ; *Minos*,
 from *Jupiter* ; *Lycurgus*, from *Apollo* ; *Zekeus*, from
Minerva ; *Numa*, from *Egeria* ; &c. so well was the World
 perswaded of the Truth and Authority of the Jewish Le-
 gislator, when they seem'd to agree in this :—That even
 a distant Imitation of him was enough to give Sanction to
 their several Fictions.

DISSERTATION I.

Of the ISRAELITES passing the Red-Sea.

Why this
 Miracle has
 been disput-
 ed.

THE Passage of the *Israelites* thro' the *Red-Sea* is what
 we have reserv'd for the Subject of our *Dissertation*,
 because it is one of the most remarkable Events in this *Pe-
 riod*, if not in the whole *Jewish History* ; and yet has had
 the Misfortune to meet with more Suggestions against its
Miraculousness, than any other, that we find upon Re-
 cord.

WHAT has contributed to this *Perverseness* may not un-
 likely be the fond Conceits, which some antient Doctors,
 both of the *Jewish* and *Christian Church*, have been pleas'd
 to affix to this Miracle : viz. That God divided the Sea into
twelve Passages, according to the *twelve Tribes* : That, to
 facilitate their Passage, he pull'd up the Weeds, remov'd
 huge

(*k*) Lib. 3. p. 174. (1) *Huetius*, Quæst. Alnet. Lib. 2.
 (*m*) Præp. Evang. Lib. 9. c. 27.

huge Stones, levell'd the rugged Places, and made the Sand, A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1491, &c. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24. at the Bottom, as hard as a Rock : That the Waters, upon being divided, were immediately congeal'd, and ſtood in *Array*, like a Wall of *Glaſs*; and that ſome Fragments of the *Egyptian Chariot-Wheels* may, even to this Day, be ſeen at the Bottom, as far as the Sight can reach. For it is not improbable, that, in Prejudice to theſe extravagant *Fancies*, others have exercis'd all their Wit and Learning to depreciate the Miracle, by aſſerting,——That there was no more in it (even as *Joſephus* himſelf ſeems to inſinuate) than in *Alexander's* paſſing the Sea of *Pamphylia*; (n) that the *Red-Sea*, eſpecially in the extreme Part of it, where the *Israelites* paſs'd, is not above two or three Miles over, and very often dry, by Reaſon of the great Reflux of the Tide; and that *Moses*, who perfectly underſtood the Country, and had made his Obſervations upon the *Flux* and *Reflux* of the Sea, led down his Men at the Time of *Ebb*, when, being favour'd by a ſtrong Wind blowing from the Shore, he had the good Luck to get ſafe to the other Side; while *Pharaoh*, and his Army, hoping to do the ſame, but miſtaken in their Computation, had the Miſfortune to be loſt. And therefore, to give this Matter a fair Hearing, we ſhall firſt endeavour to eſtabliſh the Truth of the *Miracle*, and then examine into the Pretenſions of thoſe, who are willing, either to aſcribe it to *natural Cauſes*, or to *compare* it with other Events (as they ſuppoſe) of the like Nature.

WITHOUT entering far into *Moses's* Character, we will ſuppoſe him, at preſent, a Man of common Senſe, and who had ſome Honour and Modeſty in him; and yet, if he had, we can hardly conceive how he durſt have recorded ſo palpable an Untruth, (ſuppoſing this Paſſage to have nothing *miraculous* in it) when there was ſuch a Multitude of living Witneſſes to confront him; or (o) what poſſible Artifice he cou'd uſe to perſuade above two Millions of Perſons, that God, by his Hand, had wrought a ſtupendous Miracle, when they knew, as well as he, that there was no ſuch Thing tranſacted. Among ſuch a contumacious and mutinous Set of People, *Moses* muſt neceſſarily have made himſelf *ridiculous*, and his Authority *deſpicable*, had he ever once attempted to ſoiſt ſuch a Fable upon them. And therefore,

(n) Vid. *Le Clerc's* Diſſertation, concerning the Paſſage of the *Red-Sea*. (o) *Calmet's* Diſſert. ſur le Paſſag. de la Mer Rouge.

A. M. therefore, when we find other sacred Writers bearing
 2513, &c. Testimony to what he relates, and relating the Matter in the
 Ant. Chris. like lofty Expressions; when we find the *Royal Psal-*
 1491, &c. *mist* assuring us, that (p) *God, dividing the Sea, made the*
 From Exod. *Waters to stand up on an Heap, and caused the Israelites to*
 xliii. to Chap. *pass through*; when we find the Prophet *Isaiah* demanding,
 xxxiv. 24. *(q) where is he, that brought them up out of the Sea, that*
led them by the Right-hand of Moses, by his glorious Arm
dividing the Water before him, to make him an everlasting
Name? when we find the Prophet *Habakkuk* declaring upon
 this Occasion, that (r) *the Lord made himself a Road to*
drive his Chariot and Horses cross the Sea, a-cross the Mud
of the great Waters; and when we find the Author of the
Book of Wisdom thus recording the Story; (s) *where Water*
stood before, dry Land appeared; out of the Red-Sea a Way
 without Impediment, and out of the violent Stream a green
 Field, where-through all the People went, that were defend-
 ed by thy Hand, seeing thy marvellous strange Wonders; for
 they went at large like Horses, and leaped like Lambs, prais-
 ing thee, O Lord, who hadst delivered them: When we find
 these, I say, and several more Writers of great Authority,
 asserting the Wonderfulness of this Passage, (unless we can
 suppose that they were all combin'd to impose upon us) we
 cannot but assent to the Truth of the Fact itself, how poeti-
 cal soever we may think the Words of that sacred Hymn to
 be, wherein *Moses* endeavours to display it: (t) *By the Blast*
of thy Nostrils the Waters were gathered together, the Flood
stood upright, as an Heap, and the Depths were congealed in
the Heart of the Sea.

IN an Event, so wonderful, and so unaccountable to hu-
 man Reason, it cannot be expected, but that *Traditions*
 shou'd differ, and Accounts be various: But certainly it is
 no small Confirmation of the Testimony, which the sacred
 Writers give us of it, that we find *Antiphanus*, in his Histo-
 ry of the *Jews*, as he is quoted by (u) *Eusebius*, and (x)
Clemens of Alexandria, giving us this Narration of the Mat-
 ter. “ The People of *Memphis* tell us, that *Moses*, who
 “ was acquainted with all the Country, knowing the Time,
 “ when the Tide wou'd be out, carry'd over all his Army at
 “ low Water: But those of *Heliopolis* say otherwise, viz.
 “ that

- (p) Psal. lxxviii. 13. (q) Isa. lxiii. 11, 12.
 (r) Hab. iii. 15. (s) Wisd. xix. 7, &c. (t) Exod.
 xv. 8. (u) Præpar. Evang. Lib. 9. c. 27.
 (x) Strom. Lib. 1.

“ that the King, following the *Jews* going away with what
 “ they had borrow’d of the *Egyptians*, carry’d with him a
 “ great Army; but that *Moses*, by an Order from Heaven,
 “ struck the Sea with a *Rod*, whereupon the Waters im-
 “ mediately separated, and he led over his Forces in a dry
 “ Tract, but that the *Egyptians*, attempting the same Pas-
 “ sage, were dazzled by Lightning, and, as the Sea re-
 “ turn’d upon the Paths they were in, were all destroy’d
 “ either by Fire or Water.” So that if the joint Testimo-
 ny both of *Friends* and *Foes* can have any Weight with us,
 we cannot but believe, that this Passage of the *Israelites*, as
 it is recorded by *Moses*, was certainly Matter of Fact, and
 a Fact so very wonderful and miraculous, that Nothing in
 History can stand in Competition with it.

THE Passage of *Alexander the Great* over the Sea of *Alexander’s*
Pamphylia, bears no Manner of Resemblance to this of the *Passage con-*
Israelites. *Alexander*, as (y) *Arrian* * and others relate *sider’d.*
 it, was to march from *Phaselis*, a Sea-port, to *Perga*, an In-
 land

(y) Exped. Alex. Lib. i. and *Shuckford’s* Connection. Vol.
 II. Lib. ix.

* *Strabo* relates the Matter thus. — “ About *Phaselis*
 “ there are Straights towards the Sea, through which *Alexander*
 “ pass’d his Army. There is also a Mountain, call’d *Climax*,
 “ which lies to the *Pamphylian* Sea, leaving a streight Passage
 “ to the Shore, which is quite bare in good Weather, but, when
 “ the Waves arise, it is, for the most part, cover’d with them.
 “ Now the Road by the Mountain is about, and difficult; and
 “ therefore, in calm Weather, they go by the Shore. But
 “ *Alexander* coming thither in stormy Weather, and trusting to
 “ his Fortune, wou’d go over before the Waves were abated,
 “ which made his Soldiers go all Day up to the Navel in Wa-
 “ ter, Lib. 14.” And much to the same Purpose is the Ac-
 count, which *Plutarch* gives us. “ The March through *Pam-*
 “ *phylia*, says he, has been the Subject to many Historians of
 “ mighty Wonder, and fine Declamation, as if the Sea, by
 “ Order of the Gods, gave Place to *Alexander*, which almost
 “ always is rough there, and does very rarely open a smooth
 “ Passage under those broken Rocks. But *Alexander* himself,
 “ in his *Epistles*, speaks of no Miracles, but only says, that he
 “ pass’d by *Climax*, as he came from *Phaselis*.” Vita Alex.
 Now, by the joint Authority of these two excellent Historians,
 this Passage is no more than an ordinary Thing, but the *Mosaick*
Transit must still remain a Miracle, until we find as good *Histo-*
rians to vouch for a Passage over the *Red-Sea*. *Nicholls’s* Confe-
 rence, Part II.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

land City of *Pamphylia*. The Country near *Phaselis*, upon the Shore of the *Pamphylian* Sea, was mountainous and rocky; so that he cou'd not find a Passage for his Army, without either taking a great Compass round the Mountains, or attempting to go over the *Strand*, between the Rocks and the Sea. The Historian remarks, that there is no passing along this Place, unless when the Wind blows from the *North*; and therefore *Alexander*, when he came to *Phaselis*, perceiving that the Wind blew from this Quarter, laid hold of the Opportunity; and, having sent some of his Army over the Mountains, went himself with the rest along the Shore. But now what Miracle was there in all this, unless we call the Wind's blowing *opportunely* for *Alexander's* Purpose a Miracle? It is certain, that, according to (z) *Plutarch's* Account of the Thing, *Alexander* himself thought that there was nothing extraordinary in it; and therefore we may justly wonder * at *Josephus's* comparing this Passage with that of the *Israelites*, when there is so manifest a Disparity between them. The *Israelites* cross'd over a Sea, where no Historian makes mention of any Persons, but they, that ever found a Passage; whereas *Alexander* only march'd upon the Shore of the Sea of *Pamphylia*, where the several Historians, who most magnify the divine Providence in protecting him, do all freely allow, that any one may, at any Time, go, when the Tide retreats, and the same Wind blows, that favour'd him.

That the *Israelites* Passage was not at Low-Water.

WHAT the Breadth of the *Red-Sea* may be, at the Place where the *Israelites* pass'd over, is not so easy a Matter to determine,

(z) In *Alexand.* p. 674.

* The Words of *Josephus* are these.——“ I have been more particular in these Relations, because I find them in Holy Writ; and let no Man think this Story incredible of the Sea's dividing to save the *Hebrews*, for we find it in antient Records, that This hath been seen before, whether by God's extraordinary Will, or by the Course of *Nature*, it is indifferent. The same Thing happen'd one Time to the *Macedonians*, under the Command of *Alexander*, when, for Want of another Passage, the *Pamphylian* Sea divided to make them Way, God's Providence making Use of *Alexander*, at that Time, as his Instrument for destroying the *Persian* Empire.” *Lib. ii. c. 16.* But it is evident, that *Josephus* was ignorant of the Account of the above-cited Historians, otherwise he wou'd have said nothing of the *Pamphylian* Sea's dividing for the Passage of the *Macedonian* Army, when the Matter of Fact was no such Thing.

termine, * because both *Geographers* and *Travellers* might-ly differ in their Computations. But, if (according to some of the lowest Accounts) we suppose it to be much about two Leagues, most Writers agree, that the Sea, in this Place, is very boisterous and tempestuous, which is hardly consistent with Shallowness, much less a total *Desertion* of Water, upon any hasty *Reflux*. The Wind, it must be own'd, if it blew from a right Quarter, might both forward the *Ebb*, and retard the *Flux*; but the Wind, which blew at this Time, we are told, was an *East-Wind*, whereas it must have been a *West*, or *North-west* Wind, to have driven the Water, from the Land's-End, into the main Body of the Sea, as any one, who looks into a Map, may easily perceive. But now the *East Wind* blows cross the Sea, and the Effect of it must be, to drive the Waters partly up to the Extremity of the Bay, and partly down to the Ocean, which probably is the Meaning (if we must allow an *Hyperbole* in the Expression) of the Waters being a *Wall* to the Israelites on their *Right-hand*, and on their *Left*, because they so defended them on both Sides, that the *Egyptians* cou'd no Way come at them, but by pursuing them in the same Path, which they took.

WHY they ventur'd to pursue the *Israelites*, the sacred *Historian* seems plainly to intimate, when he tells us, (a) that the *Angel of the Lord*, which went before the Camp, removed, and went behind them: It came between the Camp of the *Egyptians*, and the Camp of *Israel*, and was a Cloud and Darknes to the one, but gave Light by Night to the other: So that the true Reason, why the *Egyptians* went in after the *Israelites* into the *Midst of the Sea*, was, that they knew not where they were. They imagin'd, perhaps, that they were still upon the Land, or at least upon the Shore, whence the Sea had retir'd; the Darknes of the Night, and the *preternatural* Darknes of the Cloud, not suffering them to see the

* One affirms that the Sea is *six Leagues* wide, at this Place; another makes it but 15 *Furlongs*; one says it is narrow, and long like a River, and another allows it to be the Breadth of one *League*. *Thevenot* makes it *eight* or *nine Miles* in Breadth, but *Andricomius* will have it to be no more than *six*. Those however, who are minded to consult the Authors, who treat of this Subject, among many others, may turn to *Diodorus Siculus*, Lib. iii. *Strabo*, Lib. ii. *P. Bellon's* *Observat.* Lib. ii. *Petro della Valle*, Tom. I. Ep. 11. *Voyage de Levant.* and *Theatrum Terræ Sacræ*.

(a) *Exod.* xiv. 19, 20.

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

the Mountains of Water on each Side. But (b) *when the Lord looked on the Host of the Egyptians through the Pillar of Fire*, i. e. when he turn'd the bright Side of the Cloud upon them, to let them see the Danger they were in, and, at the same Time (as *Josephus* adds) pour'd out a Storm of Thunder, and Lightning, and Hail-stones upon them from the Cloud; (c) *let us flee*, cry'd they, *from the Face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them.*

It is not to be question'd, but that *Moses* was a Person of excellent Judgment: By his being so long a *General* of an Army, he cou'd not but know the proper Advantages, that might be made in Marches and Retreats; and yet he seems to give no great *Specimen* of his Skill, by declining the Mountains, which possibly were inaccessible to the Chariots and Horsemen, and marching his Men along the Sea Coasts, where *Pharaoh's* Army might make after him, (as we find they did) had not God commanded him to take this Rout, and foretold him the Event. Upon the Approach of the *Egyptian* Army, *Moses* has sufficiently describ'd the Consternation, which the *Israelites* were in; and, can any one suppose, that such a Situation of Things was Matter of their own Choice, or that their Leader wou'd, of his own Head, have brought them into a Place, where there was no Possibility of escaping the Fury of their Enemies, without crossing the Sea? (d) Had *Pharaoh* laid hold of this Advantage, (and Nothing but a miraculous Interposition cou'd have hinder'd him) how cou'd *Moses*, with all his *sweet Words*, and Address, have prevail'd with his People to run into the Sea? Or, (supposing he trusted to the Tide at *Ebb*) how cou'd he know for Certainty, that this *Ebb* wou'd begin precisely at the *Close* of the Day, and that the *Egyptians* wou'd allow him Time to decamp, without their Guards giving Intelligence, or their Forces pursuing them in his Retreat; which had they done, to what dismal Extremities must he and his People have been reduc'd? If we suppose that this was an hasty Resolution, which the Difficulties, he found himself in, compell'd him to take; yet we shall still be at a Loss to know, how he cou'd possibly answer for the Event, or with what Face he cou'd promise the People, that (e) *the Lord would fight for them; that they should stand still, and see the Salvation, which he would shew them; and that the Egyptians,*

(b) Exod. xiv. 19.
met's Dissert. sur le Passage de la Mer Rouge.
xiv. 13, 14.

(c) Ver. 25.

(d) Cal-
(e) Exod.

tians, who had given them so much Molestation, *they should see them again no more for ever?*

HE might not be ignorant perhaps of the Course of the Tide, and might easily discern the favourable Disposition of the Wind: But was there never a Man in all the great Army, which *Pharaoh* brought with him, of equal Observation and Skill? It is incongruous to think, that the *Egyptians*, who excell'd, at that Time, all other Nations, in their Knowledge and Observation of *celestial* Bodies, shou'd be ignorant of the *Fluxes* and *Refluxes* of the Sea, in their *own* Country, in their *own* Coast, and in their *own* most trading and frequented Ports and Havens: And, if they were not ignorant of the Time of the Reflux, it is hardly to be imagin'd, that any Eagerness of Pursuit wou'd have made them venture into the *Gulf*, when they cou'd not but be sensible, that, in Case they *miscalculated*, the returning Waves wou'd devour, and swallow them up.

BUT the Truth is, their taking the Tide *at the Ebb* wou'd serve the Purposes, neither of the *Israelites* escaping, nor the *Egyptians* pursuing them. That it badly answer'd the Design of the *Egyptians* is plain from the Event; and that the *Israelites* cou'd promise themselves no Security by it, is evident from the Nature of its Motion. (*f*) Every one knows, that, in the *Flux* of the Sea, its Waters come on *gradually*, and, for the Space of six Hours, swell higher and higher upon the Banks; and then, continuing in this State for about a Quarter of an Hour, they sink by Degrees for six Hours more, and retreating from the Shores (which is call'd the *Reflux*) they remain at their lowest Ebb, as long as they had done at their highest *Flux*, and then begin to change their Course, and creep in towards the Shore again; and in this Revolution they always go on, with the Variation only of three Quarters of an Hour, and some Minutes, in each Tide.

THAT the *Red-Sea* does ebb and flow, like other Seas, that have Communication with the *Main Ocean*, we readily grant; but then we are told by those, who have made the exactest Observations, that the greatest Distance, that it falls from the Place of High-Water, is not above three hundred Yards, and that these three hundred Yards, which the Sea leaves uncover'd at the Time of *Low-Water*, cannot continue *so* above half an Hour at most, because, during the first six Hours, the Sea does only retire by Degrees, and, in less than half an Hour, it begins to flow again towards the

(*f*) *Cairnes's* Dissert. *ibid.*

A: M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Ch.
xxxiv. 24.

A. M. 2513, &c.
Ant. Chris. 1491, &c.
From Exod. xiii. to Ch. xxxiv. 24.

Shore: So that, upon a moderate Computation, the most, that can be allow'd, both of Time and Space of passable Ground, is but about two hundred Yards, during six Hours, and an hundred and fifty, during eight. But now it is plain, that a Multitude of above two Millions of Men, Women, and Children, encumber'd with great Quantities of Cattle and Household-stuff, cou'd never be able to cross, even though we suppose it to be that *Arm* or Point of the Sea, which is not far distant from the Port of *Suez*, and allow them withal a double Portion of Time, and a double Space of Ground to perform it in; whereas the general Tradition is, that the Place where the *Israelites enter'd the Red-Sea* on the *Egyptian* Side, is two or three Leagues below this northern Point, at a Place call'd *Kolsum*; and the Place, where they came out of it, on the *Arabian* Side, is, at present, call'd (*g*) *Corondal*, where the Sea is about eight or nine Miles in Breadth.

Did not coast along the Strand, but pass'd quite through.

FROM the *Breadth* of the Sea, and the *Israelites* coming out of it at a Place (*b*) of the same Name, with that of their Entrance, some have imagin'd, that they did not cross from Shore to Shore, but only took a short Compass along the *Strand*, that was left dry at Low-Water, and so came out a little farther in the *Bay*, which the *Egyptians* attempting to do, by the unexpected Return of the Tide, were all lost. Now, besides the Incongruity (as we said before) of supposing the *Israelites* better Judges of the Tide, than the *Egyptians* were, we do not find, that the Scriptures any where determine the Length of Time, which the former employed in passing this Sea. In the *Morning-Watch* (which continu'd from *two* to *six* in the Morning) it is said indeed, that (*i*) the Lord troubled the Host of the *Egyptians*, and took off their Chariot-Wheels; but how long the *Israelites* might have enter'd the Channel, before the *Egyptians* met with this Obstruction, is no where said; so that the Computation of Time will depend upon the suppos'd Breadth of the Sea.

SUPPOSING then (as we said before) that the Breadth of the Sea was about eight Miles in all, we cannot but imagine, that a People, full of Strength and Vigour (as (*k*) the *Psalmist* represents them) pursu'd by so dreadful and enrag'd an Enemy, wou'd make the best of their Way; nor can we see any Absurdity in an Event, so abounding with Miracles,

to

(*g*) *Thevenot's* Voyage de Levant. xiii. 20 with Numb. xxxiii. 6, 8.

(*b*) Compare Exod. (*i*) Exod. xiv. 24, 25.

(*k*) *Psal.* cv. 37.

to suppose one more. (l) Now, if God interpos'd his Power to disable the Chariots of *Pharaoh*, lest the Return of the Waters shou'd excite the *Egyptians* Fears, and their Fears, by improving their Diligence, save them from Destruction; why might not God interpose the same Power (if there was Occasion) to quicken and accelerate the *Israelites*, and make them perform their Passage in due Time? Nay, if we will allow his own Words to be a good Comment upon his Actions, we cannot but suppose, that he did so, when we find him, after all was over, recounting his Kindness to them thus: — (m) *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I did bear you on Eagle's Wings*, (where the Expression certainly denotes some extraordinary Assistance given them in their Passage) *and brought you unto myself*. It cannot be deny'd indeed, but that some Ambiguity may arise as to the Place, where the *Israelites* came on Shore, (since they were at *Etham* but two Days before, and now landed in a Wilderness of the same Name) yet, if we will but suppose that there were two *Ethams*, the one a *Town*, where they encamp'd, on' the *Egyptian* Side, and the other, on the *Arabian* Side, a *Wilderness*; or, if we will needs have the Wilderness of *Etham* denominated from the Town, supposing that the Town was situated near the Upper Part of the *Red-Sea*, and gave Denomination to a great *Desart*, which surrounded the Head of the Bay, and reach'd down a considerable Space, on both Sides of it, we may easily perceive, that though the *Israelites*, in the *Evening*, march'd from the Wilderness of *Etham* cross the Gulf, yet, upon their Landing in the *Morning*, they wou'd but be in another Part of the Wilderness of *Etham* still. Upon the whole therefore it appears, that the *Israelites* coasting it along the *Egyptian* Shore, in a Kind of *Semicircle*, is both a needless and groundless Supposition. For had this been all, upon the Return of the Tide, the drown'd *Egyptians* must have been brought back upon their own Shore; whereas the Scripture Account of this Matter is, — that, as soon as (n) *Moses stretched out his Hand over the Sea, it returned to its Strength, and the Waters returned, and covered the Egyptians, who fled against them*; which certainly can denote no less, than that the Mountains of Waters were first *dissolv'd*, where they were first *congeal'd*, i. e. on the *Egyptian* Side, and that *there* beginning to re-unite, in order to stop the

D d 2

Egyptians

(l) *Saurin's Dissert.*
xiv. 27, 28.

(m) *Exod. xix. 4.*

(n) *Exod.*

A. M.
2513, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1491, &c.
From Exod.
xiii. to Chap.
xxxiv. 24.

A. M. Egyptians Return, they came rushing upon them in vast
 2513, &c. Inundations, and, of Course, sweep'd them away to the
 Ant. Chris. contrary, i. e. Arabian Shore, where all the Host of Israel
 1491, &c. were safely arriv'd.
 From Exod. xlii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

THUS we have endeavour'd to evince the Reality of this
 miraculous Event, and to examine the Pretences of those,
 who have either compar'd it with others recorded in profane
 Story, or ascrib'd it to natural Causes, or espied some seem-
 ing Contradictions in it; and have nothing now more to do,
 but, with the grateful *Psalmist*, to acknowledge, upon this
 Occasion, (o) *Thy Way, O Lord, is in the Sea, and thy
 Paths in the great Waters, and thy Footsteps are not known.
 Thou art a God, that doest Wonders, and hast declared thy
 Power among the People.*

(o) Psal. lxxvii. 19, 14.

CH A P. II.

*From the Building of the TABERNACLE, to the Death of
 KORAH, &c.*

The HISTORY.

A. M. FOR full forty Days and forty Nights *Moses* continu'd
 2514, &c. upon Mount *Sinai*, as he had done before, without ei-
 Ant. Chris. ther Eating or Drinking; and when he came down from
 1490, &c. thence, his Face had contracted such a *Lustre*, by his hold-
 From Exod. ing so long a Conference with God, that the People were
 xxxiv. 28. not able to approach him; and therefore, whenever he
 to Numb. talk'd with *Aaron*, or any of them, he was accusom'd to
 xviii. put a Veil over his Face, as long as the Lustre lasted, but
 Moses, on the Mount re- never made Use of any, when he went into the Tabernacle
 ceives Di to receive the divine Commands.

Moses, on the
 Mount re-
 ceives Di
 rections con-
 cerning the
 Tabernacle,
 &c.

WHILE he was on the Mount, God gave him the *Ten
 Commandments* written in two *Tables*, and withal full In-
 structions, in what Manner the *Tabernacle*, intended for his
 own Habitation among them, and all its sacred *Utenfils*,
 were to be made; which he now communicated to the
 People, and, at the same Time, exhorted them to bring in
 their several Offerings to that Purpose. This they did in
 such Abundance, that he thought it convenient, by a pub-
 lick Proclamation, to restrain their farther Liberality; and,
 having thus made a sufficient Collection of all Kinds of Ma-
 terials, he gave them to *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, the two great
 Artists

Artists in Building, and all Manner of Workmanship, whom God had before made Choice of.

IN less than six Months, the Tabernacle, and all its rich Furniture were finish'd ; and, on the first Day of the first Month, in the second Year after the *Israelites* Departure out of *Egypt*, it was set up : When, as soon as this was done, the *Pillar of the Cloud* († which is call'd the *Glory of the Lord*) cover'd, and quite fill'd it, so that *Moses*, for some Time, was not able to enter in. However, when he enter'd in, he receiv'd Instructions from God, which he communicated to the People, in what Manner (according to this new *Institution*) he was to be worshipp'd by *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* ; what *Festivals* were to be observ'd, and how celebrated ; what *Meats* were forbidden ; what the Instances of *Uncleanness* were ; and what the Degrees of *Con-sanguinity* prohibited in Marriage. And having appointed these, and some other Ordinances, he solemnly consecrated *Aaron* to the *High-Priest's* Office ; his Sons, and, in them, their Posterity, he made Priests ; and to these he adjoin'd the whole Tribe of *Levi*, to serve in the Tabernacle, with particular Allowances for their Subsistence, and some re-

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chriſt.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28.
to Numb.
xviii.

Consecrates
Aaron and
his Sons.

D d 3

straining

† *The Glory of the Lord* (what the *Jews* call *SCHEKINAH*) was a particular Manifestation of the Divine Presence, appearing usually in the Shape of a *Cloud*, but sometimes breaking out into a bright and refulgent Fire. For we must not suppose that the *Cloud*, and the *Glory of God*, were two different Things, but one and the same, even as the *Pillar of the Cloud* and *Fire* were ; for *outwardly* it was a *Cloud*, and *inwardly* a *Fire*. And, in like Manner here, the external Part of it cover'd the *Tabernacle* without, while the inward Part of it shone in full *Glory* within the *House* ; in which Sense the Account of this *Appearance* (Exod. xvi. 10.) is to be understood : The *Glory of the Lord* abode upon *Mount Sinai*, and the *Cloud* covered it (i. e. cover'd the *Glory of the Lord*, not the *Mount*) six Days ; for, on the seventh Day this *Glory* broke through the *Cloud*, and appear'd like a devouring *Fire* in the Sight of all the People, Exod. xxiv. 17. This wonderful Appearance, whether occasion'd by the Presence of *Angels*, or (as others imagine) by the Residence of the second Person in the ever blessed *Trinity*, took Possession of the *Tabernacle*, on the Day of its Consecration, and (as the *Jews* believe) pass'd into the *Sanctuary* of *Solomon's* Temple, on the Day of its Dedication, where it continu'd to the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple by the *Chaldeans* ; after which Time it was never more seen. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Schekinah*, and *Patrick's* Commentary.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28.
to Numb.
xviii.

straining Laws, as to their Persons, their Conduct, and Marriages.

EIGHT Days after his Consecration, *Aaron* offer'd his first *Burnt-Sacrifice* for himself and the People, which God was pleas'd to manifest his Acceptance of, in the Sight of all the People, by sending down Fire from Heaven, which, by consuming the Offering, struck them with such Reverence, that they all fell prostrate in humble Adoration before the Divine Majesty. The Fire, thus miraculously kindled, was, (a) by the divine Command, to be † kept perpetually burning, and no other to be us'd in all the Oblations that were made to God. But *Nadab* and *Abihu*, two unhappy Sons of *Aaron*, unmindful of this Command, took common Fire on their Censers, and so, entering the Tabernacle, began to offer Incense; but, by this their profane Approach, they so offended God, that he immediately struck them dead with Lightning; and, to inject Terror to the rest, order'd them to be carry'd forthwith out, and there bury'd without any Mourning, or Funeral Pomp. And, much about the same Time, he gave another Instance of his Severity against Sin, in a certain Person, the Son of an *Israelitish* Woman indeed, but whose Father was an *Egyptian*, who, for his *cursing* and *blaspheming* the Name of God, was by him directly ordered to be ston'd to Death; from which it became a standing Law, († though there was no express Precept to that Purpose

Whereof two
are kill'd
with Light-
ning, and
some other
Offenders
punish'd.

(a) Lev. vi. 12, 13.

† If it be asked, how this Fire cou'd be preserv'd, when both the *Tabernacle*, and the *Altar* whereon it burnt, were in Motion? (as they evidently were, when the *Israelites* journey'd in the Wilderness) I see no Reason, why we may not suppose, that, upon these Occasions, there might be a certain *portable Consecratory* of this *sacred Fire*, distinct from the *Altar*: And that there was some such Vessel made Use of, seems manifest from the Injunction, that, at such Times, *the Ashes should be removed from off the Altar, and a purple Cloth spread over it*, Numb. iv. 8. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. IV. Occasion. Annot. 2.

† The Criminal, and his Offence, are only thus recorded by *Moses*; — *The Son of an Israelitish Woman, whose Father was an Egyptian, and a Man of Israel, strove together in the Camp, and the Israelitish Woman's Son blasphemed the Name of the Lord, and cursed*, Lev. xxiv. 11. But the *Jews*, in explaining these Words, have follow'd either that superstitious Respect, which they pay to the Name *JEHOVAH*, or their wonted Humour of supplying the Silence of the sacred History with Circumstances no where to be found, but in their own Imaginations. In pursuance

Purpose before) that whoever was guilty of the like Offence, whether *Stranger* or *Israelite*, was to undergo the same Punishment.

NAY, and not long after this, another Instance of the divine Severity, was upon a Man, who, *by a post-fact-Law*, was likewise adjudg'd to be ston'd to Death, for violating the *Sabbath* (which God had so strictly injoin'd to be observ'd) by gathering some Sticks on that Day. There was no Penalty annex'd to the Violation of this Commandment; and therefore the People, who brought him before *Moses*, were order'd to keep him in Custody, until he shou'd know the divine Pleasure concerning *Sabbath-breakers*; and, when he acquainted them, that such Transgressors were to be punish'd with Death, (b) they immediately led him out of the Camp, and there ston'd, and bury'd him.

WHILE the *Israelites* lay encamp'd in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, God appointed *Moses* first, † to renew the Ordinance

The Israelites muster'd, and their Manner of encamping and marching.

suance to their *Superstition*, they fancy, that the Crime of this *Blasphemer* consisted simply in his pronouncing the Name *JEHOVAH*, forasmuch as they suppose, that there can be no Blasphemy without such Pronunciation; and, in pursuance to their Humour of supplying the *Silence* of Scripture, they have invented a *Genealogy* for this *Blasphemer*. For they tell us, that he was the Son of one of those Task-masters, who were set over the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, and of that very Task-master, who, by personating her Husband, violated the Chastity of the *Jewish* Matron *Shelometh*, and was afterwards slain by *Moses*, for using the same Husband with great Barbarity; that the Son, who is here mention'd, quarrelling with a Man of the Tribe of *Dan*, because he wou'd not let him encamp in the same District, brought his Cause before *Moses*; but that, being condemn'd at his *Tribunal*, he began, out of mere Rage and Madnes, to *blaspheme*. Of all this however *Moses* himself says nothing, out of a Scruple (as we may well suppose) to relate the Circumstances of a Crime, which his very Thoughts detested. *Saurin's* *Dissertations* 58.

(b) Numb. xv. 31, &c.

† During the Sojourning of the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, they seem to have had a divine Dispensation from observing the Ordinances both of Circumcision and the Passover. *Circumcision* did not consist with their itinerant Course of Life, and for the Celebration of the *Passover* they had not, in every Encampment, all the Materials that were necessary: But, having now rested in the Confines of the holy Mount for almost the Space of a whole Year, after the Tabernacle was set

up,

A. M. 2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.

dinance of the *Passover*, and then, with the Help of *Aaron*, and the *Heads* of each Tribe, to make a general *Muster* of the Men that were able to bear Arms; which accordingly was done, and the whole Number (exclusive of the Tribe of *Levi*, which were appointed to attend the Service of the *Tabernacle*) amounted to six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty Men; and, upon this Muster, God appointed their Encampment, ever after, to be in this Manner.

THE whole Body of the People were dispos'd under four large *Battalions*, so plac'd as to inclose the *Tabernacle*, and each under * one general *Standard*. The Standard of the Camp of *Judah* was first. It consisted of the Tribes of *Judah*, *Issachar*, and *Zebulun*, the Sons of *Leah*, which pitch'd on the

up, the High-Priest consecrated, and his first Oblation honour'd with a gracious Acceptance, God thought it not an improper Time to re ordain the Celebration of the *Passover*, that so remarkable a Deliverance, as their Escape out of *Egypt* (which, by their repeated Desires of returning thither, seem'd, in a great Measure, to have been forgotten) might not altogether be obliterated. And if it shou'd be ask'd, whence they cou'd have a Sufficiency of Lambs and Kids for so vast a Multitude to feast on; there is no Reason to deny (even supposing they had not a Supply of their own) but that they might traffick with the *Ismaelites*, and antient *Arabs* inhabiting these Parts, for such a Number of small Cattle, and being not far distant from *Midian* (Exod. iii. 1.) by the Interest of *Jethro*, might from thence be furnish'd with such a Quantity of Meal for unleaven'd Bread, as this one *Passover* (as this was the only one they kept in the Wilderness) may be presum'd to require. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.

* All the twelve Tribes were distinguish'd from one another by particular *Standards*, and each Standard is suppos'd by some to have been of the Colour of that Stone in *Aaron's Pectoral*, upon which the Name of the Tribe, whereunto it belong'd, was written. The Figures on the Standards of the four principal Tribes, that we have mention'd, are these—— In that of *Judah* was borne a *Lion*; in that of *Ephraim*, an *Ox*; in that of *Reuben* the Head of a *Man*; and in that of *Dan* an *Eagle*, and a *Serpent* in his Talons; which are indeed the four most perfect Animals, soasmuch as the *Lion* is the most noble among wild *Beasts*; the *Ox* among *Beasts of Labour*; the *Eagle* among *Birds*; and the *Man* among all other Creatures. *Lamy's* Introduction, Lib. 1.

the *East-side* of the Tabernacle, towards the Rising of the Sun. On the *South-Side* was the Standard of the Camp of *Reuben*, under which were the Tribes of *Reuben*, and *Simeon*, the Sons of *Leah* likewise, and that of *Gad*, the Son of *Zilpah*, her Maid. On the *West-side* was the Standard of the Camp of *Ephraim*, under which were the Tribes of *Ephraim*, *Manasseh*, and *Benjamin*. And on the *North-side* was the Standard of the Camp of *Dan* and *Naphtali*, the Sons of *Bilhah*, *Rachel's* Maid, and that of *Asher*, the Son of *Zilpah*. Between these four great Camps and the Tabernacle, were pitch'd the four less Camps of the *Priests* and the *Levites*, who had their Attendance about it. On the *East-side* encamp'd *Moses* and *Aaron*, and *Aaron's* Sons, who had the Charge of the *Sanctuary*. On the *South-side* were the *Kobathites*, a Part of the *Levites* descended from *Kobath*, the second Son of *Levi*. On the *West-side* were the *Gershonites*, another Part of the *Levites*, descended from *Gershon*, *Levi's* eldest Son; and on the *North-side* were the *Merarites*, the remaining Part of the *Levites*, who sprang from *Merari*, *Levi's* youngest Son.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.

THIS was the Order of the *Israelites* encamping; and, in like Manner, the Method of their marching was thus ——— Whenever they were to decamp, (which always was, when the *Pillar of the Cloud* was taken up from the Tabernacle) the Trumpet sounded, and, upon the first Alarm, the Standard of *Judah* being rais'd, the three Tribes which belong'd to it set forward; whereupon the Tabernacle was immediately taken down, and the *Gershonites* and the *Merarites* attended the Waggon, with the Boards and Staves of it. When these were on their March, a second Alarm was sounded, upon which the Standard of *Reuben's* Camp advanc'd with the three Tribes under it; and after them follow'd the *Kobathites* bearing the *Sanctuary*, which, because it was more *holy*, and not so cumbersome as the Pillars and Boards of the Tabernacle, was not put into a Waggon, but carry'd upon their Shoulders. Next follow'd the Standard of *Ephraim's* Camp with the three Tribes belonging to it; and, last of all, the other three Tribes, under the Standard of *Dan*, brought up the Rear.

AFTER that the *Israelites* had, for some Time, continu'd in Ease and Rest, not far from the Skirts of Mount *Sinai*, the *Pillar of the Cloud* gave them a Signal to decamp; but they had not march'd above three Days into the Wilderness,

Moses appoints 70 Elders to assist him in the Government.

A. M. Wilderuess, before they began to complain of the *Weari-*
 2514, &c. *ness* of their Journey, and to murmur against God ; which
 Ant. Chris. so provok'd him, that he † sent down *Fire*, and destroy'd
 1490, &c. the *Loiterers*, and such as were found in the extreme Parts
 From Exod. of the Camp ; so that, though, upon *Moses's* Intercession,
 xxxiv. 28. to of the Fire ceas'd, the Place nevertheless obtain'd the Name
 Numb. xviii. of *Taberah*, which signifies *Burning*.

THIS fresh Instance of the People's *Stubbornness* made *Moses* apprehensive, that though he had certainly eas'd himself, in some Measure, by constituting such Magistrates, as *Jethro*, his Father-in-law, had advis'd him to ; yet the Work of governing so numerous, and so mutinous a People, wou'd still be an Over-match for him ; and therefore, by God's immediate Direction, † he made choice of
 Seventy

† The Fire, which God sent upon the *Israelites*, came either immediately from Heaven like Lightning, or did issue from the Pillar of the Cloud which went before the Tabernacle ; or, (according to the Conjecture of a learned Commentator) that, which is here call'd Fire, might be an hot, burning Wind, in these desert Places not unusual, and many Times very pestilential, and on this Occasion *preternaturally* rais'd in the Rear of the Army, to punish the *Stragglers*, and such, as out of a Pretence of Weariness, lagg'd behind. *Le Clerc's* Commentary.

† It may be suppos'd indeed, that *Moses* had no occasion for any more *assisting* Magistrates after what had been constituted by the Advice of *Jethro*, his Father-in-law : But it is highly probable, that those of *Jethro's* advising were appointed to hear and judge only in smaller Causes, whereas all weighty and difficult Points, as well as last Appeals in smaller Matters, still were left upon *Moses* ; and that it was to ease himself of this Burthen, that he made choice of these *Seventy*, as Men of superior Capacity and Understanding, and who were to be assisted by the Spirit of God in their Judgments and Determinations. This Assembly of the *Seventy Elders*, not only the *Jews*, but even *Grotius*, and some other *Christians*, will needs have to be the same with that famous Council, which afterwards obtain'd the Name of *SANHEDRIM*. The *Rabbins* have left no Stone unturn'd to prove, that the *Snahedrim* did constantly subsist ever since its first Institution by *Moses*, and that the Members of it always assembled themselves before the Tabernacle, wherever that was set up, either in the Wilderuess, or in the promis'd Land, till the erecting of the Temple by *Solomon*, who, at the same Time, built them a stately Room or Hall to convene in. They add farther, that this *supreme* Court was
 continu'd

Seventy of the chief of the Elders of the People, Men of Renown for their Wisdom and Integrity, and every Way fit to be erected into a *supreme Court*.

To these God imparted a Portion of the same Spirit, that he had given unto *Moses*, which enabled them to be highly assistant to him in the Government of a People, which, almost every Day, were discovering a Spirit of Discontent. For no sooner were they remov'd from *Taberah*, but they began to murmur at the *Manna* they had so long eat, and to regret the *Flesh-pots* of *Egypt*, they had parted with; and hereupon they beset *Moses's* Tent on all Sides, and, in a tumultuous Manner, demanded of him a Supply of *Flesh*, instead of *Manna*; which, how unreasonable soever it was for them to request, God nevertheless promis'd *Moses* to perform: And, accordingly, caus'd the *South-Wind* to arise, which drove vast Quantities of *Quails* from the Sea-Coasts to within a Mile of the Camp, where they lay, about a Yard thick, upon the Ground. But while they were regaling themselves with these Dainties, the Anger of the Lord fell upon them, and smote a great Number of them with a sore Disease, whereof they suddenly dy'd, in Memory of which the Place came to be call'd *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, i. e. the *Graves*, or *Sepulchres* of *Lust* and *Concupiscence*.

FROM this Place the People took their Journey to *Hazereth*, where another unhappy Accident beset them. For *Aaron* and his Sister *Miriam*, observing what great Power their Brother *Moses* had with the People, and that God chiefly made use of him in the Delivery of his Oracles to them, began to envy him; but, to give some Colour to their Quarrel, they pretended to fall out with him upon Account of his marrying a Foreigner, whom they call'd in Contempt an *Ethiopian*. This *Moses* cou'd not but perceive:

continu'd in *Babylon*, during their Captivity there, and that, at their Return, it had the same Place rebuilt in the *second* Temple, and so continu'd till its total Extinction under the *Romans*. But as they bring no Authority for these, and many other Particulars relating to this Assembly, but merely their own *Traditions*, they are justly rejected by the major Part of *Christians*, who can find no Foot-steps of any such high Court, either in the Times of *Joshua*, of the *Judges*, or of the *Kings*, nor indeed after the *Babylonish* Captivity, till the Time of the *Maccabees*. *Calmet's* Dissertations, sur la Police des anciens Hebreux, and Universal History, Lib. 1. c. 7.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.

From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.

The People
murmur for
Want of
Flesh.

And Aaron
and Miriam
against Mo-
ses.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xvi. i.

ceive: But as it was a personal *Pique*, he took no Notice of it. God however wou'd not fuffer it to go off fo; and therefore calling *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam* before the Door of the *Tabernacle*, he fharply rebuk'd the two latter. He gave them to underftand the Difparity, † in Point of *divine Revelation*, between them and him, and (to leave a Brand upon their contumacious Affecting an *Equality*) he immediately fmote *Miriam* † with a Leprofy; and

† The *Jewifh* Commentators make the Difference between *Moses*, and other Prophets, to confift in thefe Particulars. 1st, That God fpake to others by a *Mediator*, i. e. (as they explain it) by fome Angel; but to him by himfelf, without the Intervention of any other. 2dly, That they never prophesy'd, but their Senfes were all bound up either in Vifions, or in Dreams; whereas he was perfectly awake, as we are, when we difcourfe one with another. 3dly, That after the Vifion was over, they were oftentimes left fo weak and feeble, that they cou'd fcarce ftand upon their Feet, (as appears from *Dan. viii. 18.*) whereas *Moses* fpake with the divine Majefty without any Confternation, or Alteration. And 4thly, That no Prophet, but he, cou'd know the Mind of God, when he pleas'd, becaufe he communicated himfelf to them only when he thought proper; whereas *Moses* might at any Time have Recourfe to God to enquire of him, and receive an Answer. *Patrick's Commentary.*

† A *Leprofy*, as well as all other Diftempers (fuch as the *Scurvy*, *Ring-worm*, *Itch*, &c.) which bear Refemblance to it, does proceed originally from a previous ill Difpofition both in the Blood and Juices, but the more immediate Caufe of it is an Infinity of *small imperceptible Worms*, that infinuate themfelves between the Flefh and Skin, which firft prey upon the *Scarf-Skin*, then upon the *inner Skin*, and afterwards upon the Extremities of the *Nerves* and *Mufcles*, from whence arifes a total Corruption of the whole Mafs of Blood, and all the other Symptoms attending it. But the Leprofy here inflicted upon *Miriam* was fudden and instantaneous. The Juices of her Body were not corrupted by a gradual Decay, but turn'd at once into thofe corroding *Animals*. And, as this was a fit Punifhment for her Pride and Detraction, fo, by its being inflicted on her, and not on *Aaron*, it feems not improbable that ſhe was *firft* in the Transgreffion, and drew *Aaron*, (who feems, in fome Inftances, to be a Perfon of too much *Facility*) over to her Party. *Aaron* indeed, by his Office, was appointed to judge of Leprofy, which he cou'd not have done, had himfelf been infected with it; and as he was lately confecrated his

CHAP. II. *from the Israelites Departure from Egypt, &c.* 445

and though, upon *Moses's* Intercession, he promis'd to remove it, yet, because the Offence was *publick*, he order'd her to be turn'd out of the Camp for seven Days, in the Manner of any common Leper, that others might be deterr'd from the like *seditions* Practices. After several Encampments, the People came at length to † *Kadesh-Barnea*, on the Frontiers of *Canaan*, where *Moses* was commanded to chuse twelve fit Men, out of each Tribe one (among whom were *Joshua* and *Caleb*) to take a View of the Country: And, accordingly having receiv'd their Instructions from him, to examine diligently into the Strength of its Cities and Inhabitants, the Nature and Fertility of its Soil, and the like, they set out upon their Progress, and finish'd it in forty Days.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.
He sends
Spies into
the Land of
Canaan.

AT their Return they pass'd through a Valley, which, for its Fertility in Vines, is call'd the Valley of *Eshcol*, which signifies a *Cluster of Grapes*; and here they cut down a Branch, with but one Cluster upon it, which, * by Reason

his High-Priest, God, for the Preservation of his Authority, might not think it proper to make him so soon become vile and contemptible in the Eyes of the People, as this Distemper was known to make Men. *Calmet's Dissertation, sur la Nature, &c. de la Lepre*, and *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Most Commentators and Geographers are of Opinion, that whatever is said of *Kadesh*, in the Travels of the *Israelites*, is to be understood of one and the same Place; whereas the sacred History plainly makes mention of two Places of the same Name; one, adjoining to the Wilderness of *Paran*, which is mention'd, *Numb. xiii. 26.* and the other lying in the Wilderness of *Sin*, mention'd in *Numb. xx. 1.* and *xxxiii. 36.* *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. II.*

* That there are Vines and Grapes of a prodigious Bigness in those eastern and southern Parts of the World, is a Matter recorded by several Writers. *Strabo* tells, that in *Margiana*, and other neighbouring Countries, there were Vines so very thick about, that two Men cou'd scarce fathom them, and that they produc'd Bunches of Grapes of two Cubits long. *Pliny* informs us, that in the Inland Parts of *Africa* there are Bunches of Grapes bigger than young Children. *Olearius*, in his Travels into *Persia*, acquaints us, that, not far from *Astracan*, he saw Vines, which a Man cou'd hardly grasp with both his Arms; and the learned *Huetius* affirms, that in *Crete*, *Cbios*, and other Islands in the *Archipelago*, there are Bunches of Grapes, from ten, to forty Pounds in Weight. *Quest. Alnet. Lib. 2.* and *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

A. M. son of its immoderate Largeness, as well as to preserve the
 2514, &c. Grapes from being bruis'd, they hung upon a Pole, and
 Ant. Chrif. carry'd between two Men's Shoulders. Nor was this the
 1490, &c. only Product of that happy Soil; the golden Fig, and beau-
 From Exod. tiful Pomegranate adorn'd the Trees, and a Variety of other
 xxxiv. 28. to Fruits (of which they brought *Samples* along with them).
 Numb. xviii. loaded the luxuriant Branches.

BEING at length happily arriv'd in the Camp, they went, and made their Report to *Moses* and *Aaron*, in the Presence of the Elders, and of all the People. They began indeed with extolling the Riches of the Land, and shew'd them a *Specimen* of some of the Fruits, which it produc'd; but when they perceiv'd that this Account had fir'd the People with a Desire to become the happy Possessors of it by a speedy Conquest, ten of them then began to alter their *Tone*, and to represent it as a Thing impossible, both by Reason of the Strength of its fortified Towns, and the Valour, and *gigantick* Stature of its Inhabitants.

Upon their
 Report, the
 People are
 for returning
 to Egypt,
 and the
 false Spies
 are slain.

JOSHUA and *Caleb* were the only two, that remain'd true to their Report, and gave them all imaginable Encouragement, that the Enterprize was practicable; but the cowardly Account of the other ten had got such a powerful Possession of them, that they cry'd out, one and all, that they could never hope to overcome such powerful Nations, in Comparifon of which they look'd upon themselves as mere *Grashoppers*, and *Reptiles*; and their Murmuring, in fhort, grew to fuch an Height by the next Morning, † that

† Though they might, in their raging Fits, fpeak of returning into *Egypt*; yet it is 'an amazing Thing, that they fhould continue in their Madnefs, and deliberate about it, nay actually appoint them a *Leader*, as *Nehemiah*, ix. 17. fays they did. For how could they get thither without Food, which they cou'd not expect that God wou'd fend from Heaven, when they had thus fhamefully forfaken him? How cou'd they hope to find their Way, when the Cloud, which directed them, was withdrawn from them, or think of *coping* with fuch Nations, as wou'd oppose their Passage, in Cafe they fhould hit upon the right Way? And, after all, if they came into *Egypt*, what Reception cou'd they expect from a People, whose King, and Princes, and *Firft-born* had lately been destroy'd upon their Account? Nothing can be faid in Answer to thefe Questions, but that outrageous Difcontent infatuates Men's Minds, and will not fuffer them to confider any Thing, but that which grieves them. *Patrick's* Commentary.

that a Return to *Egypt* was thought more adviseable; than to face such an Enemy. Nay, in the Hearing of *Moses* and *Aaron*, of *Caleb* and *Joshua*, (who endeavour'd to dissuade them all they could, even to the Hazard of being ston'd by them) they were deliberating upon a proper Person to re-conduct them into the Land of their former *Thralldom*; when, all on a sudden, the *Glory of God* appear'd in a brighter Lustre than ordinary, in the Tabernacle, and from thence was heard to speak to *Moses* in such *threatning* Terms, as gave the People Cause to fear, that some speedy and terrible Judgment wou'd be the Reward of their Rebellion and Ingratitude.

HERE *Moses* was forc'd again (as at several other Times) to become their *Intercessor*, and made use of such powerful Arguments, and Expostulations, as did, in some Measure, avert the divine Vengeance: But, as their Ingratitude and Infidelity were become intolerable, notwithstanding God's constant Care in providing against their Wants, skreening them from their Enemies, and preserving them from all Dangers; he solemnly declar'd, that none of that Generation, above twenty Years of Age, except * *Joshua* and *Caleb*, (who receiv'd his Commendations for their Fidelity) shou'd enter into the promis'd Land, but shou'd wander, from Place to Place, in the Wilderness, for the Space of † forty Years: And as for the false *Spies*, the immediate

* *Josephus* introduces *Joshua* and *Caleb*, (in order to pacify the tumultuous People) delivering themselves in Words to this Effect. "How is it possible for you, *good People*, to distrust the Veracity and Goodness of God, and, at the same Time, to give Credit to Stories and Amusements about the Land of *Canaan*, that are propagated on Purpose to abuse you? Why shou'd not you rather believe and follow those, who have taken so much Pains to put you into the Possession and Enjoyment of the Blessings you desire? What's the Height of Mountains, or Depth of Rivers to Men of undaunted Spirits, and of honourable Resolutions; especially, when God is both their Protector and Defender? Wherefore let us advance, and attack the Enemy, without ever questioning the Event. Only trust God for your Guide, and follow us, where we shall lead you." *Jewish Antiquities*, Lib. 3. c. 14.

† *Moses* here makes use of a round Number, in Allusion to the forty Days of the Spies searching the Land; though it is plain, that the *Children* did enter into the Land of *Canaan* in less than thirty-nine Years, after this Sentence was pronounced against

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.

A. M. mediate Authors of this Rebellion, they were all destroy'd
 2514, &c. by a sudden Death (c), and became the first Instances of the
 Ant. Christ. Punishment denounc'd against the whole Nation.
 1490, &c.

From Exod. THIS severe Punishment, join'd with the Sentence of
 xxxiv. 28. to Exclusion from the promis'd Land, gave the Humours of
 Numb. xviii.

The Israelites Forwardness now wou'd make some Atonement for their
 defeated. former Cowardice; they assembled themselves together next

Morning, and offer'd to go upon the Conquest. *Moses* endeavour'd, what he cou'd, to dissuade them from so rash an Enterprize, by telling them, that it was contrary to God's exprefs Command, and therefore cou'd not prosper; that, by their late undutiful Behaviour, they had forfeited his Assistance and Protection, without which it was impossible for them to succeed; and that, as the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites* had gain'd the Passes of the Mountains before them, there was no fighting them upon the *Par*. But all this Admonition had no Weight with them: Notwithstanding the *Ark of the Covenant* went not with them, notwithstanding *Moses*, their *General*, was not at the Head of them; yet out they march'd to the Top of the Mountains, where the Enemy surpriz'd, defeated, and, having slain many of them, pursu'd the rest, as far as *Hormah*.

The Rebellion of Korah, &c. and the Destruction that attend'd it. WHILE the People continu'd in the Wilderness, many remarkable Occurrences beset them, and Seditions, almost innumerable, were daily fermenting; but one in particular was hatch'd (with the utmost Deliberation) in the Breast of one of the *Chiefs* of the Tribe of *Levi*, and countenanc'd by some of the most considerable Men in the whole Camp.

Korah

against their *Fathers*. The Truth is, *Moses* reckons the Time past since they came into the Wilderness, which was a Year and half; so that the Meaning of the Sentence is, ——— That they shou'd wander for forty Years in all, before they went out of the Wilderness; which however is not to be understood so precisely, as to want nothing at all of it: For since they came out of *Egypt* on the 15th Day of the first Month, and arriv'd in *Canaan*, and pitch'd their Tents in *Gilgal*, on the tenth Day of the first Month of the one and fortieth Year after their Departure out of *Egypt*, Josh. iv. 19; it is plain that there wanted five Days of full forty Years. Universal History, Lib. 1. c. 7. and *Patrick's Commentary*.

(c) Numb. xiv. 36, 37.

† *KORAH*, the great Grandson of *Levi* by his Father *Jahar*, and, consequently, one of the Heads of that *Tribe*, impatient to behold *Aaron*, and his Family rais'd to the highest Office in the *Priesthood*, to which he thought himself had an equal Title, was always caballing against him, until he had drawn a considerable Number of eminent Persons into his Interest, and, among these, *Dathan*, *Abiram*, and *Hur*, who were Heads of the House of *Reuben*. As soon as Things were ripe for an open Rupture, *Korah* appeared at the Head of the Faction, and publickly upbraided *Moses* and *Aaron* with an unjust Ambition, in usurping upon the Liberties of the People, in ingrossing all Power into their own Hands, and excluding every Body else.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii

SURPRIZ'D at the Boldness of this Accusation, *Moses*, for Concern, fell prostrate upon his Face; but when he rose again, he desir'd that the Determination of their Controversy might be left to God, and, for that Purpose, appointed them to appear, on the Morrow, at the Door of the Tabernacle, with every Man his Censer in his Hand: And then addressing himself to *Korah*, and the rest of the *Levites*,

† At what Time, or in what Encampment, this Rebellion of *Korah* and his Adherents happen'd, the sacred History has not inform'd us; but, as the general Opinion is, that the Cause of the Mutiny was his Resentment upon the Advancement of *Aaron*, and his Family, to the Office of the High-Priest; so we find *Josephus* introducing him, as addressing himself to his Accomplices in Words to this Purpose: "A Scandal it is, and
" a Thing not to be endur'd, for *Moses* to take upon him at
" this Rate; to carry on his Ambition thus, under the Mask of
" Holiness and Religion, and by that Means to raise himself
" a Reputation to the Wrong of other Men. He gave lately
" the Priesthood, and other Dignities to his Brother *Aaron*,
" without any Right or Colour for it. No Consent of the
" People was ask'd, nor any Pretence of Authority produc'd,
" save only his own arbitrary Will and Pleasure: ——— For
" what has he to say for himself for so doing? If God has an-
" nex'd the Honour to the Tribe of *Levi*, I myself may pre-
" tend a Right to the Preference, being of the same Stock with
" *Moses*, and his Superior both in Riches and Years: Or, if it
" be to pass by Seniority, it belongs to the Tribe of *Reuben*,
" viz. to *Dathan*, *Abiram*, and *Phalu*, who are the Seniors of
" that Tribe, and Men of eminent Credit every Way among
" them." *Jewish Antiq. Lib. 4. c. 2.*

A. M. *vites*, he put them in mind of their Ingratitude and Arrogance, in not being content with the Dignity and Privileges, which God had annex'd to their Tribe, without aspiring at the *High-Priesthood*, which he had reserved to *Aaron*, and his Posterity.

2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.

DATHAN and *Abiram* were at some Distance, when *Moses* thus talk'd with the rest; and therefore, supposing that they had been drawn into the Conspiracy by *Korah's* Insinuations, he sent privately to them, with a Design to argue the Case more calmly with them: But, instead of a civil Answer, he receiv'd an haughty Message, wherein they upbraided him with a Non-performance of his Promise, and "that he had decoy'd the whole Nation, from the rich and fertile Land of *Egypt*, under the Pretence of bringing them into a much better, but, instead of that, had only detain'd them in a barren Wilderness, there to domineer and tyrannize over them." At which Message *Moses* was so highly provok'd, that he appeal'd to God against the Injustice of it, and, at the same Time, requested of him not to regard the Prayers and Offerings of such ungrateful Wretches.

EARLY next Morning *Moses* and *Aaron* went towards the Tabernacle, whither *Korah*, at the Head of his Party, with each Man a † Censer in his Hand, (attended with a vast promiscuous Multitude, which came, in all Probability, to be Spectators of this famous Contest) fail'd not to repair. The first Thing that drew their Eyes, was, the amazing Splendor, which issu'd from the Cloud over the Tabernacle, from which God call'd to *Moses* and *Aaron* to withdraw from that rebellious Crew, lest they shou'd be swallow'd up in the Destruction, which he was going to bring upon them. Hereupon *Moses*, having first requested of him not

† The two hundred and fifty Princes had not, as yet, offer'd any Incense, because they were prevented by Death; however it may be presum'd, that they had lighted their Censers at the holy Fire, by which they obtain'd (at least in the Opinion of the People) a Kind of Consecration: And therefore, to keep up among them a Reputation and Esteem for Things consecrated, as well as to shew the Difference between his own Institution, and Men's Contrivances, God order'd all these brazen Censers to be wrought into broad Plates, and to cover the Altar with them; that being polish'd bright they might, by their Lustre, put the People in Mind of the Offence of those, who were once Owners of them, and so caution others against the like Offence. *Howell's History of the Bible, Lib. 2.*

not to slay the Innocent with the Guilty, advertis'd the People (if they consulted their own Safety) to separate themselves from the Company of these wicked Men; and then bespake the Assembly to this Purpose: — “That, if these Rebels dy'd in the common Way of Nature, he wou'd give them leave to call in question his *divine* Mission; but that, if the Earth did immediately open itself in a miraculous Manner, and swallow them up alive, he then hop'd that they wou'd look upon him, only as an Instrument in God's Hand, and sufficiently authoris'd for all he did.” And no sooner had he ended these Words, but the Earth clove asunder under their Feet, and swallow'd them up alive, together with their Families, and all their Substance; while, at the same Time, *Korah*, and his Company, (who stood with their Censers before the Court of the Tabernacle) were all destroy'd by a miraculous Fire from Heaven: And, to perpetuate the Memory of this Judgment, as well as to deter, for the future, any, but the Sons of *Aaron*, from presuming to burn Incense before the Lord, *Eliezar* was order'd to gather up the Censers of the Dead, and to have them beat into broad Plates for a Covering of the *Altar*.

So terrible a Punishment, one wou'd think, might have been sufficient, for some Time at least, to have kept the *Israelites* within the Bounds of their Obedience; but, no sooner were they recover'd from their Fright, than they began to murmur afresh, and to accuse *Moses* and *Aaron* for having murder'd the People of the Lord, as they were not asham'd to call that seditious Crew. *Moses* and *Aaron* were well aware of the unruly Temper of the People, and therefore fearing to what Degree of Madness and Outrage they might proceed, they took Sanctuary in the Tabernacle; where they had no sooner enter'd, but God threaten'd to destroy all the rest of the Congregation, as it were, in a Moment, and had already sent out a Plague amongst them; which *Aaron*, at his Brother's Directions, endeavour'd to assuage by his interposing, with a Censer of Incense, between the Dead and the Living; but the Plague, in this short Time, had rag'd so violently, that no less than fourteen thousand and seven hundred Persons (besides those, that perish'd in the Sedition of *Korah*, and his Company) were carry'd off by it.

THIS was enough, in all Reason, to establish the Authority, *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical*, in the Hands of the two Brothers: However to put *Aaron's* Claim beyond all Man-

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28. to
Numb. xviii.

And Aaron's
Priesthood
confirm'd to
him by a M.
racle upon
his Rod.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 24. to
Numb.
xviii.

ner of Dispute, God was pleas'd to confirm it by one Miracle more. *Aaron*, on the one Side, and the *Heads* of every Tribe, on the other, were order'd to bring each Man his Rod, with their respective Names written upon them, and these were to be deposited in the Tabernacle, until the next Morning ; by which Time God wou'd decide in Favour of that Family, on whose Rod some miraculous Change shou'd be seen. Accordingly, when they came to examine them next Morning, † *Aaron's* Rod alone was found, not only to have budded, but blossom'd likewise, and brought forth ripe Almonds : In Memory of which remarkable Decision, God order'd the Rod to be laid || up in the *Ark of the*

† Some will needs have this Rod of *Aaron's* to have been the same with that of *Moses*, wherewith he wrought so many Miracles in *Egypt*, and at the *Red Sea* ; but there is this Argument against them, that the Miracle of its *Blossoming* had not been a sufficient Conviction to the *Israelites*, if so be that *Aaron's* Rod had not been of the same Kind with the rest. For, whatever had come to pass, they might have ascrib'd it to the singular Quality and Virtue of the Rod (especially had it been *Moses's* *Wonder-working* Rod) and not to the special Hand of God interposing to establish the Authority of *Aaron* ; whereas, on the contrary, we find that the Miracle had its intended Effect, and silenc'd for ever the Pretences of other People to the Priesthood. It is presum'd therefore by some learned Men, that the Rods, which the several Princes brought *Moses*, were neither their common *Walking-staves*, nor any such Wands, as were a Badge of their Power and Authority in their respective Tribes, but rather certain *Twigs*, that were cut off from some *Almond-Tree*, and not improbably from one and the same Tree, that there might be no manner of Difference between them. The Difference, however, next Morning, appear'd in this : ——— That on the *Twig*, which bore *Aaron's* Name, there was, in some Places, an Appearance of Buds coming forth ; in others, the Buds were open'd, and shot forth into Blossoms ; and in others, the Blossoms were knotted, and grown into Almonds. *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's* Commentaries.

|| It is made a Matter of some Enquiry, whether this Rod of *Aaron's* was put *within* the Ark of the Covenant, or only *by it*. God commanded *Moses* to put it only in the Tabernacle (*Numb.* xvii. 4.) to be preserv'd there ; but *St. Paul*, in *Heb.* ix. 4. says, that it was plac'd *within* the Ark, with a Pot of Manna, and the Tables of the Law. Others affirm, that it was not put *within*, but only *by the Side* of the Ark ; and for their Opinion

the Covenant, and gave an exprefs Prohibition, that none, A. M. but the Sons of *Aaron*, fhould prefume to come into the ^{2514, &c.} ^{Ant. Chrift.} Tabernacle, under Pain of Death. ^{1490, &c.} ^{From Exod.} ^{xxxiv. 28.} ^{to Numb.} ^{xviii.}

The OBJECTION.

“ *MOSES*, no doubt, was a peculiar Favourite of
“ God, and his Admiffion to an intimate Converfa-
“ tion with him, on the *faced* Mount, was a Vouchsafe-
“ ment of an extraordinary Nature; but it feems a little
“ irreconcilable to our Thoughts, how human Nature, in
“ its prefent Situation, cou’d be able to fubfift *forty Days and*
“ *forty Nights*, without any Manner of Sufenance; nor
“ can we conceive, how the Countenance of *Moses* came
“ to contract a bright and radiant Luftre, by converfing
“ with the Deity, at this Time, more than it did, when he
“ went up to the Mount before. The *Israelites*, without
“ all Queftion, were a very obftinate and perverfe Sort of
“ People; but (to magnify himfelf) *Moses* feems to have re-
“ prefented them in blacker Colours, than they did deferve;
“ becaufe it is hardly to be imagin’d, how they cou’d, after
“ having been *Eye-Witneffes* of fo many Miracles wrought
“ for their Prefervation, go on ftill in diftrufing, and com-
“ plaining of God; nor can we devife any Reason, why
“ they were not punifh’d a Year before, as well as *now*,

E e 3

“ for

nion they alledge a Passage, in *1 Kings* viii. 9. which feems to intimate, that there was nothing in the Ark, but the Tables of the Law: But then their Adverfaries contend, that *St. Paul*, in that Passage to the *Hebrews*, is to be underftood *literally*; that there cou’d be no Hindrance for its being put into the Ark, fince the Ark was five Foot long, and cou’d not but be of Capacity enough to hold it; and therefore, when the Scripture fays, that there was nothing in the Ark but the Tables of the Law, they conceive that it may be underftood with this Limitation. — That nothing elfe was *originally* in it, becaufe the Ark was *primarily* intended for that Ufe; but this need not hinder but that, afterwards, other Things likewise might be put in it. How long this wonderful Rod continu’d in this *Repository*, is no where mention’d in Scripture. When the Ark was brought into *Solomon’s Temple*, *1 Kings* viii. 9. there is no Notice taken of it; and yet it feems reasonable to think, that it fhould have been preferv’d for fome confiderable Time, and preferv’d in that very *Verdure*, wherein it now appear’d, with its Buds, Bloffoms, and Fruit, for the Conviction of Pofterity, *Calmet’s Dictionary*, under the Word *Rod*.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28,
to Numb.
xviii.

“ for *asking Fleſh for their Luſts*, ſince, at both Times,
“ their Crime was equally the ſame.

“ (d) *God's Hand cannot wax ſhort*, as himſelf told
“ *Mofes*, neither can his Power admit of any Diminution ;
“ and yet it ſeems to favour of ſome Defect in that Reſpect,
“ and to be a Derogation from the Greatneſs of the Mi-
“ racle, that we find *Quails* (which they had before) ſent
“ here again, upon their ſecond Complaint. *Quails*, no
“ doubt, are excellent Food; but a *Diverſity*, one wou'd
“ think, had been more agreeable to the *Generality*, and
“ more expreſſive of God's Sovereignty over the World ;
“ becauſe a *Repetition* of the ſame Diet to a People he was
“ minded to gratify, ſeems as incongruous a Thing in him,
“ as it wou'd be in a *Clerk of the Kitchen* to be always
“ ſending up the ſame *Bill of Fare*.

“ (e) *Whatever goeth in at the Mouth*, we muſt allow,
“ *defileth not the Man* ; and therefore we may juſtly won-
“ der, why God ſhou'd enact (f) a Prohibition of ſeveral
“ Kinds of Food, which have no Relation to inward *Purity*,
“ and to many of which Mankind ſeem to have a natural
“ Aversion, without a divine Interdiction: And tho' the
“ *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* has inform'd us, that ſeveral
“ Things relating to the *Tabernacle-Service*, were Types
“ of *Chriſt*, yet we are ſtill at a Loſs to know, why the
“ great *Mysterieſ* of Man's Redemption ſhou'd be *prenoti-*
“ *fy'd* by ſuch dark *Shadows* and *Emblems*, and not rather
“ diſcover'd in the plainest *Predictions*, and *Expreſſions*
“ imaginable.

“ GRIEF for the untimely Death of a Child, is what a
“ good-natur'd Parent cannot refrain, and therefore how
“ much ſoever we may ſuppoſe, that the two young Men,
“ *Nadab* and *Abihu*, deſerv'd to ſuffer for their Indiscretion ;
“ yet it ſeems to be an unreaſonable Reſtraint upon the
“ innate Paſſions of human Nature, for God to forbid
“ *Aaron* to make any Moan or Lamentation for them. Nor
“ can we think it any Inſtance of *Mofes's* Prudence and
“ Modeſty, to commend himſelf ſo highly *for being very*
“ *meek*, *above all the Men that were upon the Face of the*
“ *Earth*, or to relate the Difference between him, and his
“ Brother and Siſter, who ſeem to have had ſufficient Rea-
“ ſon to quarrel with him, for marrying another *Ethiopian*
“ Woman,

(a) Numb. xi. 23.
xi. 13.

(e) Matth. xv. 17, 20.

(f) Lev.

“ Woman, and so disgracing their Family, by a base and
 “ *idoltrous Alliance.* A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28.
to Numb.
xviii.
 “ FIT however it was to bring the Matter to a speedy
 “ Accommodation, otherwise the Defection of *Korah* might
 “ have prov’d more dangerous, and the Juggle of *Aaron’s*
 “ *fructifying Rod* (which, according to the History, was
 “ certainly under *Moses’s* Management, and who, by Slight
 “ of Hand, might easily have substituted an Almond Branch
 “ in the room of it) cou’d not have been carry’d on so dex-
 “ troufly. But to make Almighty God interpose in a Fa-
 “ mily-Quarrel, and condescend so far, as to call the se-
 “ veral Parties before him, is certainly debasing the divine
 “ Majesty, and giving it an Employ a little below its Dig-
 “ nity.”

IN this State of our Infirmary indeed, we are oblig’d to *Answer’d,*
 repair the gradual Decays of our Bodies with a Supply of *by shewing*
 daily Food; but in that of a greater Perfection, there will be *the Reasons*
 no Occasion for these weak Supports of human Nature. In *of Moses’s*
 the mean Time we are assur’d, that (g) *Man doth not live*
by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the
Mouth of God, by whose Command our natural *Perspira-*
tion may be so shut up, and the Instruments of our *Diges-*
tion so retarded, as to make a small Quantity of Meat sub-
 sist us for a considerable Time. *Elijah*, we read, had (h)
 but a *Cake baken on the Coals*, and a *Cruse of Water* for his
 whole Repast, even when he was going to undertake a long
 Journey; and yet we find, that both under the Fatigue of
 Body, and Expence of Spirits, which Travelling must ne-
 cessarily occasion, he was enabled to *go in the Strength of*
that Meat forty Days and forty Nights. And for the like
 Reasons we may suppose, that *Moses* being now receiv’d
 within the Cloud on Mount *Sinai*, might find no uneasy
 Cravings of Appetite, during his Stay, and long Conversa-
 tion with God.

THE *Jews* have a Proverb with Relation to this long
 Fasting of his, (i) which tends to this Purpose, “ that
 “ *above*, where there is neither Eating nor Drinking, *Moses*
 “ stay’d eighty Days, (*viz.* at two different Times) and
 “ became like the Angels; and *below*, where Men do eat
 “ and drink, *ministering* Angels come down, and eat
 “ and drink, like them.” Whereby they seem to impute
 this Alteration of Appetite in both to a Change of *Climate*,
 rather than a *Miracle*. But whether the Climate contributes

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28.
to Numb.
xviii.

to it or no, it is certain, that God, by Influences and Emanations from himself, can support a Man, as long as he thinks fit, and keep up his Spirits in their just Height, without the common Recruits of any Kind of Aliment.

IT is another Notion of the *Jews*, (*k*) that, as Eating and Drinking are Actions, which prejudice the Understanding, God, who intended to prepare his *Servant* for the Reception of the Revelations he was going to communicate, withheld all Meat and Drink from him, that, by depressing his *bodily* Faculties, he might exalt his *intellectual*. In the Case of *Daniel*, it is certain, that, in order to dispose him for the heavenly Vision, (*l*) *he did eat no pleasant Bread, neither came Flesh or Wine in his Mouth, for three whole Weeks together*, as himself testifies: And therefore, considering the many wonderful Things, which God intended to impart to *Moses*, there seems to be a *Propriety* at least, if not an absolute *Necessity*, of his being put under the like *Regimen*, to enable him, with more Facility, to comprehend them.

St. *PAUL* is suppos'd to speak of himself, (though Modesty makes him conceal it) when he expresses his Visions in these Words: — (*m*) *I knew a Man in Christ, above fourteen Years ago, (whether in the Body I cannot tell, or out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third Heaven; and I knew such a Man (whether in the Body, or out of the Body I cannot tell, God knoweth) how he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable Words which it is not lawful, or (as the marginal Note has it) not possible for Man to utter.* Now, wherever the divine Presence is, there is *Paradise*, and there is *Heaven*: And therefore, if St. *Paul*, when he was in a Vision, and thought himself translated to the Regions above, in the Contemplation of the wonderful Things, he saw and heard there, lost all Sense of his Body, and Perception of its Affections; why may we not suppose, that the Joy and Extasy, wherewith *Moses* was transported, upon the like Occasion, made him never think of once eating or drinking?

A Man must be a Stranger to deep Study and Meditation, who has not experienced in himself a total Forgetfulness, for some Time, not only of the *nimble Minutes*, as they pass'd away, but of the *Necessities of Nature* likewise, as they came upon him; and even found, at length, that his
Recollection,

(*k*) *Patrick's Commentary.*
xii. 2, &c.

(*l*) *Dan. x. 3.*

(*m*) *2 Cor.*

Recollection, and Sensation of these Things, proceeded from an Imbecility of his Mind, which was not able to endure a continu'd Intention, or Stretch of Thought, more than any natural *Call*, which seems to have been suspended, as long as his superior Faculties were thus agreeably employ'd. With much more Reason therefore we may conclude, that, in the Presence of God, where the Mind might be impregnated with a Power to sustain the Fatigue of close, perpetual Thinking, the Variety of Objects, which presented themselves, wou'd be so great, and the Entertainment of its intellectual Faculties so very strong, as wou'd quite absorb all corporal Desires and Appetites.

HAD *Moses* therefore been employ'd in no farther Capacity, than barely in contemplating the many amazing Wonders of God's infinite *Being*, which the Irradiations from his *beatifick* Presence must have transfus'd upon his Mind; this had been enough to suspend all other Operations, and engross, as it were, the whole *Complex* of his Faculties. But besides this, the Scripture informs us, that (n) he took a Review of the *Model* of the Tabernacle, and its Furniture, which God had shewn him when he was with him before, and (as we may suppose) receiv'd *fresh* Instructions from God. This cou'd not but take up some Portion of his Time; as most of the Remainder of it seems to have been spent in (o) Prayer and Intercession with God for the People, that he wou'd restore them entirely to his Favour, and bring them, in his good appointed Time, to their Inheritance.

UPON the whole therefore it appears, that, as *Moses* was in the *Presence* of God all the while that he continu'd on the *Mount*; had a full *Employ* for his Mind and Thoughts, during that Time; and by the divine Influence, had his *Spirits* sustain'd in their proper Height, and his *animal* Part preserv'd without wasting; he cou'd have no Leisure to think of eating and drinking, or, that (had he thought thereon) he cou'd find in himself no *Call* or Occasion for it.

THE Word *Karan*, which our Translators have made *Why Moses's shining*, is by the *Vulgar* render'd *cornutus*, or *horned*; and, from this Misapplication of Ideas, *Painters* very probably have been induc'd to draw *Moses* with a Pair of Horns branching, as it were, out of his Forehead; whereas the proper

(n) From the Beginning of the xxvth Chap. of *Exodus* to the End of the xxxth Chapter. (o) Deut. ix. 18, 19, 25, 26. and x. 10.

A. M.
2514, &c.
Ante. Chris.
1490, &c.
From Exod.
xxxiv. 28.
to Numb.
xviii.

~~~~~



A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28.  
to Numb.  
xviii.

proper Representation of him ſhou'd be, with a *Glory*, covering his Head, in the Manner that the Saints are painted in the *Roman Church*: For it is not improbable, that the Hair of his Head was interſpers'd with Rays of Light, at the ſame Time that a certain beauteous Luſtre proceeded from his Face, and dazzled the Eyes of its Beholders.

*MOSES* was certainly in this, as well as many other Things, an eminent *Type* of our Saviour *Chriſt*, and the *Change* of his Countenance an *Emblem* of our Lord's *Transfiguration* upon the Mount, when (*p*) his Face (as the *Evangelist* relates the Matter) did *ſhine as the Sun*, and his Raiment was as white as the Light. In both Caſes, it was the glorious *Being* (*q*) within the Cloud, that transfus'd this radiant Splendor around his Son and *Servant*: But the Reason, why *Moses*, at his firſt Time of being upon the Mount, and converſing with God, did not contract this wonderful Brightneſs, ſeems to be this;——That he had not then ſeen the *Divine Majeſty* in ſo great a Splendor, as he did now. He was oblig'd then to keep at a more awful Diſtance from the tremendous *Throne* of God, and not come within the *Circle* of its Refulgency; but now, upon his humble Petition, God was pleas'd to vouchſafe him ſuch a Sight of his *Glory*, as his human Nature cou'd bear. So that, by being permitted to come within the Circumference of it, he carry'd off (tho' unknown to himſelf) \* ſuch a beamy Luſtre from the divine Refulgency, as (like the *lambent Fire*, wherewith the Poets adorn the Temples of their *Heroes*) play'd about his Head and Face, and there was permanent for ſome conſiderable Time: For, *Moses* being now to bring down the Tables of the *Covenant* from the Mount, that the People might not ſuſpect him of any Fallacy or Coluſion, or think that his Pretence to a Correſpondence with the *Deity* (as that of ſome ſubſequent Lawgivers prov'd) was vain and fictitious, God was pleas'd to ſend along with him

(*p*) Matth. xvii. 2.

(*q*) Ver. 5.

\* It was a Cuſtom amongſt the antient *Heathens*, and probably deriv'd from what here beſel *Moses*, to repreſent the Gods with a beamy *Glory* around their Heads, ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ ἀκτίνας φορέειν, to carry Rays about their Heads, as *Lucian de Deâ Syriâ* has it: And hence it was, that the *Roman Emperors*, who were rais'd ſo much above the reſt of Mankind, that they were honour'd as a Sort of *Deities*, were thus repreſented; as appears from the Teſtimony of *Pliny*, (among many more) who, in his *Panegyrick* to *Trajan*, makes the *Radiatum Domitiani Caput* the Subject of ſome Banter. *Patrick's Commentary.*

him this *Testimony*, as it were, of his having held Communion with God. For the miraculous *Radiancy*, wherewith he was adorn'd, shew'd in what Company he had been during his Absence; confirm'd his Message to the People; and, in every Respect, carry'd new *Credentials* in it.

It may seem a little strange indeed, why a People, so immediately under the Guidance of God, shou'd, every Day, stand in need of so many new *Credentials*, and, upon every little Emergency, fall a murmuring and rebelling against the God of *Israel*, and his Servant *Moses*. St. Stephen, in quoting the Prophet *Amos*, has let us into the Cause of this People's frequent Prevarications: (r) *O ye House of Israel, have ye offered to me slain Beasts and Sacrifices, by the Space of forty Years in the Wilderness? Yea, ye took up the Tabernacle of Moloch, † and the Star of your God Remphan, Figures which ye made, to worship them.* By *Moloch* the Learned are pretty well agreed, that we are to understand the Image of the *Sun*, and by *Remphan*, that of the Planet *Saturn*; and that the Worship of these Idols was a common Thing among the *Israelites*, in the Time of their Sojourning in the Wilderness, is manifest from that Passage of the *Prophet*, where he introduces God thus complaining of the Perverseness of that People: (s) *In the Day, that I chose Israel, and lifted up my Hand unto the Seed of the House of*

(r) Acts vii. 42, 43.

† Thus the *Septuagint*, from whom St. Stephen took this Passage in *Amos*, translate it; but the Import of the *Hebrew* Text is this, *Ye have borne the Tabernacle of your Kings, and the Pedestal (so the Word Chiuu signifies) of your Images, the Star of your Gods, which ye made to yourselves.* So that it seems very probable, that the LXX read *Rephan* or *Rewan*, instead of *Chiuu* or *Chewan*, and thereby mistook the *Pedestal* for a *God*. *Kircher* however, and *Salmasius* assert, that *Kiuu* is *Saturn*; that his *Star* is call'd *Keiran* among the *Persians* and *Arabians*, and that *Remphan*, or *Rephan* signify'd the same Thing among the *Egyptians*; and therefore they suppose, that the *Septuagint*, who made their Translation in *Egypt*, chang'd the Word *Chiuu*, into that of *Remphan*, because they had the same Signification. *Remphan* is generally suppos'd to have been an *Egyptian* God; and *Hammond*, in his Notes upon Acts vii. 43. is of Opinion, that this was the Name of a certain King of *Egypt*, who, after his Death, was deify'd by his Subjects: But of what Make and Figure the Image of this *Idol* was, or in what Manner he was worshipp'd, we can no where learn. *Calmét's* Dictionary, under the Words *Chiuu* and *Remphan*.

(s) Ezek. xx. 5. &c.

A. M. of Jacob, to bring them forth out of the Land of Egypt, un-  
 2514, &c. to a Land that I had espied for them, flowing with Milk  
 Ant. Christ. and Honey, then said I unto them, "Cast ye away every  
 1490. &c. "Man the Abominations of his Eyes, and defile not your-  
 From Exod. selves with the Idols of Egypt: I am the Lord your  
 xxxiv. 28. "God." But they rebelled against me, and would not hear-  
 to Numb. xviii.

ken unto me; they did not every Man cast away the Abomina-  
 tions of their Eyes, neither did they forsake the Idols of  
 Egypt. Nay, so far were they from forsaking the Idols of  
 Egypt, that we find them adopting strange Gods from every  
 other neighbouring Nation, which occasion'd that severe  
 Commination in God: (t) I will set my Face against that  
 Man, and will cut him off from among his People, because  
 he has given of his Seed unto † Moloch, to defile my Sanctu-  
 ary, and to profane my holy Name. And if any one fail to  
 punish this Idolater, then will I set my Face, says God, a-  
 gainst that Man, and against his Family, and will cut him  
 off, and all, that go a whoring after him, from among their  
 People.

Now if Idolatry was a Practice, which the *Israelites* re-  
 tain'd, and, in some Instances, improv'd, after their Depar-  
 ture

(t) Lev. xx. 3, &c.

† The *Rabbins* assure us, that the Idol *Moloch* (which was  
 the same as *Baal*, the *Sun*, or Lord of Heaven, worshipp'd by  
 all the People in the *East*) had its Image made of Brass, sitting  
 upon a Throne of the same Metal, having the Head of a Calf,  
 adorn'd with a royal Crown, and his Arms extended, as it were,  
 to embrace any Thing: But what the Children's *passing through*  
*the Fire* means, they are not so well agreed. Some of them are  
 of Opinion, that Parents, in the Worship of this Idol, did not  
 actually burn their Children, but only caus'd them to leap  
 through Fire that was lighted before it, or to pass between two  
 Fires plac'd opposite to each other, by Way of Lustration;  
 but the Expressions of *David* are a little too strong to admit of  
 this Interpretation. For, when he tells us, that they *sacri-*  
*ficed their Sons and Daughters unto Devils*, and that they *shed in-*  
*nocent Blood*, even the Blood of their Sons and Daughters, whom  
 they sacrificed to the Idols of Canaan, *Psal. cvi. 37, 38.* we can-  
 not but infer, that they did actually murder their Children in  
 this execrable Way. ——— When any Infants were to be  
 sacrific'd, the Idol was made hot by kindling a great Fire in the  
 Inside of it; and when it was heated to a most intense Degree,  
 the miserable Victim was put into its Arms, and soon consum'd  
 by the Violence of the Heat; but that the Cries of the Chil-  
 dren might not be heard in their Extremities, the People were  
 wont to make a great Noise with Drums, and other Instruments,  
 about the Idol. *Calmet's Dictionary, and Dissertations.*



ture out of *Egypt*, there is great Reason to presume, that these *Idolaters* were the very *Murmurers* also, who infected the Camp with their *Infidelity*. They might believe (because they saw so many Manifestations of it) the Residence of a God amongst them; but then it is not unlikely, that they thought of him (as most of the *Heathens* thought of their Gods) that he was a *local* and *limited* Deity, who had done something for them indeed, but cou'd not do all they wanted; who had brought them into the *Wilderness*, but had not the Power to conduct them into *Canaan*.

IN this Manner it is, that the *Psalmist* represents them reasoning with themselves. (u) *Shall this God of ours prepare us a Table in the Wilderness? He smote the stony Rock indeed, that the Water gushed out, and the Streams flowed withal; but can he give Bread also, and provide Flesh for his People?* Many of these Miracles they saw wrought before their Eyes; but then they might look upon *Moses*, who did them, (x) to be no more than a meer *Magician*, though perhaps of a better Sort, than those of *Egypt*; and, consequently, might be apprehensive, that, upon every new Turn and Exigence, his Art wou'd fail him: and therefore, having no better Notions of God, and so gross a Conception of their *Leader*, it is no Manner of Wonder that they ran into *Murmuring* and *Discontent*, into *Riot* and *Disorder*, upon every little Difficulty, that press'd them.

Two Times we find them complaining for the Want of such Food, as they desir'd; once (y) in the *Wilderness of Sin*, a few Days after their Passage of the *Red-Sea*, and again, at the Encampment (z) of *Kibroth-Hittavah*, not long after their Departure from Mount *Sinai*; and, at both of these Times, God thought proper to send them *Quails*: Not out of any *Destitution* or *Scarcity* of other Provision, (for (a) *all the Beasts of the Forest are his, and so are the Cattle upon a thousand Hills; he knows all the Fowls upon the Mountains, and the wild Beasts of the Field are in his Sight*) but for this very Reason,——That how willing soever he might be to supply his People's Necessities, he had no Design to pamper their Appetites with a needless Variety, or to multiply Miracles without any just Occasion. And therefore, as both these Events happen'd in the *Spring*, when *Quails* (which are found in great Quantities upon the Coasts of the *Red-Sea*) are accusom'd to pass from *Asia* in-

to

(u) *Psal.* lxxviii. 20, 21. (x) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. IV. *Occas. Annot.* 5. (y) *Exod.* xvi. 3, 13. (z) *Numb.* xi. 34. (a) *Psal.* l. 10, 11.

A. M. 2514, &c. Ant. Christ. 1490, &c. From *Exod.* xxxiv. 28. to *Numb.* xviii.

A. M. to Europe. God caus'd a Wind to arise, which, in their  
 2514, &c. Flight, drove them towards the Camp of the *Israelites*, and  
 Ant. Christ. 1490, &c. (b) (as the *Eastern Tradition* has it) was so very violent,  
 From Exod. that it broke their Wings, and made them fall at a conve-  
 xxxiv. 28. nient Distance, and in a proper Condition to be taken up.  
 to Numb. xviii.

THAT *Quails*, among us, are very excellent Food, can-  
 not be deny'd; but the same Tradition informs us, that  
 these Birds, in *Arabia Felix*, do vastly surpass all others,  
 and, (as our Author expresses it) have *neither Bones, Veins,*  
*nor Sinews in them*, i. e. are very fat and tender, something  
 like our *Fig-peckers*, and *Ortolans*. And therefore, tho'  
 God refus'd to gratify their Palates with a profuse Variety of  
 Dainties, yet is there no Fault to be found with his Provision,  
 since the Food he sent them was delicious in its Kind, and a  
 whole Year had now interven'd between the former and lat-  
 ter Flight of *Quails*, to whet their Appetites, and prevent  
 any Danger of being cloy'd with the same Dish.

Why he was  
 angry at  
 their second  
 Murmuring,  
 tho' not at  
 the first.

SOMETHING however there was in their Behaviour,  
 which provok'd God, in this their *latter*, more than their  
*former* Complaint for Want of Flesh, to punish them so  
 severely. (c) The Desire of Flesh for Food is, in itself,  
 but *natural*, and, absolutely speaking, far from being *crimi-*  
*nal*, or provoking to the Author of Nature, who cre-  
 ated every Appetite of Man, as well as his Understanding:  
 But when this breaks out into Murmuring, Mutiny, and  
 Disorder, the Case is then entirely alter'd. In the *former*  
 of these Cases, the People were in Want of Bread, and  
 really pinch'd with Hunger; but in the *latter*, they had  
*Bread from Heaven* in Abundance, and may therefore be  
 said to complain not out of *Need*, but *Wantonness*. Their  
 Discontent in the former Case was express'd comparatively,  
 in modest Terms; but here their Tone is, (d) *Who shall*  
*give us Flesh to eat? We remember the Fish, which we did*  
*eat in Egypt freely, the Cucumbers, and the Melons, and the*  
*Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick; but now our Soul*  
*is dried away; there is nothing at all, besides this Manna,*  
*before our Eyes.* This same Contempt of the *Manna*, which  
 God so miraculously sent from Heaven, especially in Persons  
 so well instructed in the divine Will, was such an Instance  
 of Baseness and Ingratitude, as justly deserv'd the Punish-  
 ment it met with.

IN

(b) Vid. Bibl. Orient. p. 749. Col. 1. (c) *Bibliotheca*  
*Bibl.* Vol. IV. Occas. Annot. 3. (d) Numb. xi. 5, &c.

IN the former Time of their Complaining, God wink'd at their Ignorance, and pitied their Distress: He had not then given them his Laws for the Rule of their Actions and Appetites, and therefore, never looking to reap, where he had not sowed, he was not so extream as to mark what they had done amiss; but, after he had publish'd his Precepts from the *Holy-Mount*, and many more Instructions from the *Tabernacle*, he then expected that their Obedience shou'd keep pace with their Knowledge, and was more provok'd at their Backslidings, than before, because they proceeded not from the Ignorance of their *Minds*, but the Perverseness of their *Wills*: For, this was the true and the just Cause of their (e) *Condemnation*, that, even when *Light* was come into the *World*, they loved *Darkness* rather than *Light*, because their *Deeds* were evil.

IN the 11th Chapter of the Book of *Leviticus*, we have a Catalogue of the Beasts, Fishes, and Fowls, which God either permitted, or prohibited the *Israelites* to eat. From his first making Choice of them, God's Purpose was to distinguish them from other Nations, and more especially from the *Egyptians*, among whom they had long liv'd, had contracted their Manners, and were too tenacious of their Customs: And therefore, in Opposition to these, he enjoined them to eat such Creatures, as were worshipp'd in *Egypt*, which wou'd be an effectual Means to render the Pretences of these *sham* Deities contemptible; as, on the contrary, he order'd them to abstain from those, that were held in the greatest Delicacy among them. And, because the *Egyptians* wou'd have nothing to do with such Animals, as had *Hoofs* and *Horns*; the *Jews* were allow'd to eat none, but what parted the *Hoof*, as well as chew'd the *Cud*.

It is to be observ'd farther, that, in the very *Make* and *Nature* of some Animals, there are certain *Qualities*, which prejudice Mankind against them, and seem, as it were, to defecrate their Use; that some, for Instance, are monstrously big, others very ugly and deform'd; some come from heterogeneous Mixtures, others feed upon dead Bodies; and to others most Men have an inbred Antipathy; so that, in the Main, what the Law forbid the *Jews* in this Regard, was Nature's Aversion before: But then the Question is——Why the Things, which they were naturally averse to, and wou'd have refrain'd without it, were made the Matter of a divine *Interdiction*?

Now,

(e) John iii. 19.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

Why he prohibited the Use of certain Animals for Food.



A. M. Now, if we trace the History of these People, we shall  
 2514, &c. find, that they had their Seasons of Affliction and Scarcity,  
 Ant. Chris. as well as of Prosperity and Plenty. At the very Time,  
 1490, &c. as well as of Prosperity and Plenty. At the very Time,  
 From Exod. when these Prohibitions were given them, they were tra-  
 xxxiv. 28. to velling, and were to continue travelling for many Years in a

Numb. xviii. waste and barren *Desart*, which, being destitute of the  
 Conveniencies and Necessaries of Life, might tempt them  
 to make Experiment upon the Flesh of some of those Ani-  
 mals, that they naturally abhorr'd, but, upon this Occasion,  
 as they thought, might innocently make use of: And there-  
 fore, to set a stronger Guard upon human Nature, God  
 thought proper to confirm this their innate Aversion, by the  
 Sanction and Establishment of Laws, which were to last  
 beyond the Term of their Continuance in the Wilderiness.

THE Truth is, this People, by their gross Impieties, and  
 Prevarications with God, brought frequently upon them-  
 selves Famines, and Sieges, and other Calamities, wherein  
 they suffer'd very grievously. To pass by the Famines,  
 which happen'd (*f*) in *Judea*, (*g*) in the Times of the  
*Judges*, and (*h*) in *David's* Days; in the Reign of *Ahab*,  
 there was (*i*) a dreadful one in *Samaria*, when an *Ass's*  
*Head was sold for fourscore Pieces of Silver, and the fourth*  
*Part of a Cab of Doves-Dung* (it shou'd be render'd *Pulse*)  
*for five Pieces of Silver*; and (what is more lamentable  
 still) when Mothers enter'd into Compact about eating their  
 own Children. But the most *tragical* Account of all is  
 that, which their own Historian has recorded of them, at  
 the Siege of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*, when Wives snatch'd the  
 Necessaries of Life from their Husbands, Children from  
 their Parents, and Parents from their Children; (*k*) when  
*Mothers* were forced, for their own Support, to defraud  
 their *Infants* of the little *Milk*, that was in their Breasts,  
 while the *Infants* were dying in their Arms for want of it;  
 when Hunger and Necessity turn'd every Thing into Victuals,  
 and (what is shocking to human Nature but barely to think  
 on) (*l*) made one *Jewish* Lady of Quality eat her own  
 Child.

Now the Use, that I wou'd make of this melancholy  
 Part of their History, is this:—That, as to God's  
 Prescience were. present from Everlasting all the Wicked-  
 nesses,

(*f*) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. III. Occasional Annot. 3.

(*g*) *Ruth* i. 1. (*h*) *2 Sam.* xxi. 1. (*i*) *2 Kings* vi. 25.

(*k*) *Josepb. de Bello Jud.* Lib. v. c. 10. (*l*) *Josepb. de Bello*  
*Jud.* Lib. vi. c. 3.

nesses, and Rebellions of this People; so were those Penalties and Judgments, which his infinite Wisdom determin'd to be most suitable to them. For what Method can be thought more proper, to make an Impression upon those that forsake God, than that he shou'd forsake them, *i. e.* so far, at least, as to withdraw the Succours of Life from them?

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

And, considering his Prohibition of certain Animals for Food under this View, it was certainly a kind and generous Warning to his People, not to bring themselves, in Consequence of these Provocations, (which he foreknew, and against which he had so strictly caution'd them) into such Circumstances, as wou'd oblige them, either to forbear the very last Means of sustaining Life, or to break more of God's Commandments, than they had done before.

BUT there is a farther Reason, arising from the Quality of Animals, why God might enact a Discrimination of Meats, and that is — to give his People therein a *mystical System of Morality*. Thus the Birds, which were allow'd to be eaten, (the Pigeon, the Dove, the Partridge, for Instance) were either tame, or of gentle Nature, feeding on Grain or Pulse; whereas all the *Species*, that liv'd on Prey, and such as gorge themselves with Flesh and Blood, were utterly forbidden, thereby to bring into Reputation Justice, and Mercy, and Moderation, and, at the same Time, to discountenance the contrary Disposition to Rapine, Oppression, and Cruelty. It is a noted *Allegory*, That in *Homer*, of *Circe's* changing *Ulysses's* Friends into Hogs. By *Circe*, the Poet intends that we shou'd understand *sensual Pleasures*; by *Ulysses*, *Reason* and *Discretion*; and by his *Retinue*, the inferior Faculties, and Powers: And, in like Manner, the Prohibition of Swines Flesh was design'd to restrain the *Jews* from such Lusts, *as war against the Spirit*, as pollute and debase human Nature, like that Creature's *wallowing* in the Mire: For (as a learned Author observes) (*m*) the *Jewish* Law was more remarkably strict in its Prohibitions of Things, that were sordid and slovenly; wherein it seems to have had an especial Aim to the training and forming of a People, that had liv'd uncultivated, by Reason of their long Slavery in *Egypt*, and their dirty Work in Clay and Bricks, to an Elegancy and Politeness of Manners, as well as a Detestation of all filthy and brutal *Lusts*, that, *being set free from Sin*, (as the Apostle expresses it) (*n*) *they might*

(*m*) *Spencer*, de Legibus Heb.    (*n*) 1 Cor. vi. 20.

A. M. might glorify God in Purity and Holiness, both in their Bodies, and in their Spirits, which were his.

2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.

1490, &c.

From Exod.

xxxiv. 28. to

Numb. xviii.

(Why God

made Use of

Types in the

Jewish Ser-

vice.

THE same Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, has inform'd us, that (o) the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope, by which we draw nigh unto

God, did. The Jewish High-Priest was a Type of our blessed Saviour, and his Entrance into the *Holy of Holies*, of our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, after his Resurrection.

The Sacrifices, which were offer'd under the *Levitical Law*, were previous Representations of the Death of Christ; and the Redemption of Mankind by the Effusion of his Blood was exhibited, every Day, in the several Oblations in the Tabernacle: (p) For if the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer, sprinkling the Unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the Flesh; how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offer'd himself without Spot to God, purge the Conscience from dead Works, to serve the living God? Now, besides the Arguments, which might be drawn from the *Grossness* of the *Jews* Understanding, and their Incapacity to receive a more *spiritual* Dispensation, God might have this farther Design in setting before them the *Mystery* of Man's Redemption under such *typical* Representations, viz. that thereby he might excite their Industry, and give a fuller Scope to the Exercise of their Faith. For, that the Faith, and Hope, and other Graces of the Patriarchs, and devout *Jews*, were more effectually prov'd by the Exhibition of Things ambiguous and obscure, than if they had been altogether open'd in the fullest and plainest Propositions, is a Matter that can hardly be contested. To rest assured, that God wou'd bring to pass what he had expressly and circumstantially foretold, shew'd indeed a sincere and true Faith in *general*; but to be persuaded, that faint Resemblances, and the remotest Hints were pregnant with Certainty and Solidity, and wou'd, in their proper Time, be gloriously compleated, (how unintelligible soever they might be at present) was (if we may so call it) a *special Advance* of *heroick Faith*, and render'd their Dependance and Resignation as compleat as possible. And, accordingly, the *Apostle*, having enumerated several antient *Worthies*, who, by Faith, extended their Views, and look'd upon the Dispensation they were under, as no more than a *System* of Types and *Shadows* of the good Things to come, concludes their Character



rafter in the following Manner : (q) *And these all, having obtained a good Report through Faith, received not the Promise : God having provided some better Thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* So that the Jewish Religion and Worship was, in some Respects, adapted to the Capacity, and Genius both of the *Learned* and *Ignorant* : Of the *Ignorant*, as being made up of Pomp and Shew enough to attract their *Attention* ; and of the *Learned*, as abounding with *Shadows*, and *Emblems* of higher Matters, enough to exercise their deepest *Contemplation*.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.



WHAT the Sin of *offering strange Fire before the Lord* The Nature of Nadab and Abihu's Transgression. was, and, upon what Account it rais'd the divine Indignation against *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the two Sons of *Aaron*, will best appear, by attending a little to the probable Occasion of it. After the Consecration of *Aaron* and his Sons to the priestly Office, we are told, that a miraculous *Fire from the Lord*, i. e. a Fire, which either came immediately down from Heaven, or out of the Cloud, which cover'd the *Tavernacle*, consum'd the first Victim, which *Aaron* offer'd for a *Burnt-Offering* ; that God had expressly commanded, that (r) *the Fire, which was upon the Altar*, shou'd not be suffer'd to go out, which (according to the Consent of most Interpreters) signifies, that the said miraculous Fire, which had confirm'd the Installation of *Aaron* and his Sons after so surprizing a Manner, shou'd be kept *alive*, and burning with the utmost Care ; and that, as at this very Fire *Aaron* was (s) requir'd to light the *Incense* which he offer'd to God in the most holy Place, on the great Day of *Expiation* ; so may we take it for granted, that the like Injunction was impos'd on the *inferior* Priests, with Relation to the *Incense*, which they were to offer every Day before God in the *holy Place*. We have indeed no mention made of such a Law, but the History, we are commenting upon, gives us strong Presumption, that the Use of this Fire *only* was permitted ; and therefore the Words (t) in the Text, *which he commanded them not*, is thought to imply an express Prohibition of any other.

THE Crime then of *Nadab* and *Abihu* consisted in their kindling the *Incense*, which their Office of Priests oblig'd them to offer every Morning and Evening, with Fire, different from that which was continually on the Altar of *Burnt-Offerings*, and consequently, different from what God order'd

F f 2

(q) Heb. xi. 39, 40. (r) Lev. vi. 12. (s) Ibid. xvi. 12.  
(t) Lev. x. 1.

A. M. 2514, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

der'd them to use. † Other Offences indeed have been laid to their Charge. Some pretend, that they endeavour'd to intrude into the *most holy Place*, which was not permitted them to enter; because, immediately after the Recital of the Manner of their Death, *Moses* in another Place relates, that God commanded him to speak unto *Aaron*, (*u*) *that he shou'd not come, at all Times, into the holy Place, within the Veil, before the Mercy Seat, that he died not*; but others insinuate, that they were guilty of Intemperance, at the Entertainment made at their *Installation*, because, after the Account of their fatal End, *Moses*, by God's Order, gives this Injunction to *Aaron*, and the Remainder of his Sons: (*x*) *Do not drink Wine, nor strong Drink, thou, nor thy Sons with thee, when ye go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, lest ye die. It shall be a Statute for ever through your Generations, that ye may put Difference between Holy and Unholy, between Unclean and Clean.* But these are no more than bare Surmises, that have no proper Foundation in the foregoing Texts, nor is there any Occasion to hunt out for Passages to augment these Offenders Crime.

*NADAB* and *Abihu* had not only been admitted, in common with the rest of their Brethren, to the Honour of the *Priesthood*, which, among the *Jews*, was a Dignity of no small Esteem; but had particular Motives which the others had not, to the Observance of all God's Commandments, as having had the Privilege of seeing the *Symbols* of the Divine Presence, (on the *formidable Mount*, from whence his Laws were promulg'd) without being consum'd. The higher therefore their Station was, and the more distinguishing the Favours they had receiv'd, the more provoking was their Affront, in attempting to adulterate an Ordinance

† The Author of the *Connection*, so often cited, supposes another Kind of Innovation to have been the Occasion of their untimely Death. God as yet, says he, had given no Law for the offering of Incense in *Censers*; all that had been commanded about it, was, that *Aaron* shou'd burn it upon the *Altar of Incense* every Morning and every Evening, but these Men took upon them to begin, and introduce a Service into Religion, which was not appointed, and which, if it had been suffer'd, wou'd have open'd a Door to great Irregularities; and therefore God, by an exemplary Judgment upon the first Offenders, put an effectual Stop to it. *Shuckford*, Vol. III, Lib. xi.

(u) Lev. xvi. 2. (x) Ibid. x. 9, 10.

Ordinance of God's Institution. *Common Fire*, they thought, might serve the Purpose of burning Incense, as well as that which was held more sacred: At least, in the *Gaiety*, or rather *Naughtiness* of their Hearts, they were minded to make the Experiment, even in Opposition to the divine Command; and therefore (y) it was just and requisite in God (especially in the Beginning of the Priesthood, and when one Alteration of a divine Precept might, in Process of Time, be productive of many more) to inflict an *exemplary Punishment*, that others might *hear, and fear, and not commit the like Abomination*.

AND for this Reason, *viz.* the Injection of Terror into others, *Moses* is commanded to make no Lamentation, or funeral Pomp for them; which, among the *Jews*, who, of all other Nations, were so very sumptuous in their *Obsequies* of their deceas'd Friends, was accounted a fore Judgment. In the Case of *Jehoiakim* the King of *Judah*, the Commination of God is thought very terrible. (z) *They shall not lament for him*, saying, *ah my Brother, or ah Sister: They shall not lament for him*, saying, *ah Lord, or ah his Glory. He shall be buried with the Burial of an Ass, drawn, and cast forth beyond the Gates of Jerusalem*. Temporal Judgments however are not always sure Indications of the final Condemnation of the Persons on whom they fall, and therefore *Aaron* had no Occasion utterly to despond: On the contrary, he might presume, that the Justice of God, being satisfy'd with the present Punishment of his Sons, might be appeas'd, with Relation to their eternal State; and that tho' their (a) *Flesh was destroyed, yet their Spirits might be saved in the Day of the Lord*. He knew too, how much himself had offended in the Matter of the *golden Calf*, and might justly think, that God had call'd his Sin to Remembrance in the Destruction of his two Sons. He acknowledg'd therefore the Righteousness of God, in all that he had brought upon him, and, in the Phrase of Scripture, (b) *was dumb, and opened not his Mouth, because it was the Lord's doing*.

WHAT the Occasion of the Difference between *Moses* and his Brother *Aaron*, and Sister *Miriam* was, is not so very evident: The History indeed tells us, that (c) *they spake against Moses, because of the Ethiopian, or rather Arabian Woman, whom he had married*. The Generality of

A. M. 2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris. 1490, &c.  
From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

*Aaron's Behaviour thereupon.*

F f 3

Interpreters

(y) *Le Clerc's Commentary.* (z) *Jer. xxii. 18, 19.*  
(a) *1 Cor. v. 5.* (b) *Psal. xxxix. 9.* (c) *Numb. xii. 1.*



A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

Interpreters suppose this Woman to be *Zipporah*, the Daughter of *Jethro*, whom he married in *Midian*; for those, who imagine her to have been another, can hardly get over this Difficulty—— Why *Moses* shou'd set so bad an Example, as to marry, at two several Times, a *Foreigner*, rather than one of the Daughters of his People. The first Time indeed, that he did so, was, when he liv'd in a State of *Exile*, but was nevertheless kindly receiv'd in a Family of the best Distinction in the Place, which might be Inducement enough for his matching himself with one of the Daughters, since no express Precept against Matches of this Kind was then in Force. But now, that he was set at the Head of a People, who were to be separated from the rest of Mankind, and was conducting them into a Country, with whose Inhabitants they were to have no *matrimonial* Intercourse, for fear of introducing Idolatry, it wou'd have been highly indecent, and unpopular, an Affront upon his own Country-Women, as well as a dangerous Inlet to Impiety, for him to have marry'd into an *idolatrous* Nation; nor wou'd his Brother and Sister have been the only Persons to clamour against him, but the whole *Congregation* wou'd have risen up in Arms, upon so notorious a Provocation. Since therefore we hear of no such Commotion, we may reasonably conclude, that this *Cushite*, or *Arabian* Woman, was the same *Zipporah*, whom he had marry'd some forty Years before. But then why they shou'd quarrel with him upon her Account, at this Time, and no sooner, is the Difficulty.

Now to resolve this we must observe, that when *Jethro*, his Father-in-law, was in the Camp, it was by his Advice that *Moses* (*d*) instituted Judges to determine lesser Causes; and that he found his Son *Hobab* so very serviceable to him in the Capacity of a *Camp-master-general*, that || he earnestly entreated him to continue with him, and receive

(*d*) Exod. xviii. 21, 22.

|| *Moses's* Words to *Hobab* are these:—— *Leave us not, I pray thee, forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the Wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of Eyes.* Numb. x. 31. But if the Being, which resided in the miraculous Cloud, was their Guide, what Need was there for *Hobab's* Stay? Now the Design of the Cloud was to direct the People when to decamp, and where to encamp again; but for the securing of their Camp against all hostile Force they were left to human Means: And

ceiv'd him, no doubt, into great Confidence. It is to be observ'd farther, that, in the foregoing Chapter, we have an Account of the Creation of the *seventy Elders* to assist in the Administration, and that these Elders were nominated by *Moses*, without ever consulting *Aaron* or *Miriam*. As therefore this Story of their quarrelling with him is immediately subjoin'd, it seems very likely, that, taking themselves to be neglected, in so great an Alteration made in the Government without their Advice, they were very angry; but, not daring to charge *Moses* directly, they fell foul upon his Wife, giving her opprobrious Names, and complaining to the People very probably, that she, and her Brother, had too much Power and Influence over *Moses*.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

*JOSEPHUS*, in his *Jewish History*, makes no mention of this Family-Difference, as thinking that it might reflect Discredit upon his Nation; but *Moses* was an Author of more *Veracity*, than to conceal any Action, which was proper for Mankind to know, even though it tended to the lasting Disgrace of his own Family. For he does not affect to aggrandize the Thing, or to make his Family appear more considerable, when he introduces God as arbitrating the Difference between them; but purely to acquaint us, that, as the *Israelites* liv'd then under a *Theocracy*, God himself, being their *immediate King*, undertook to decide the Controversies depending between such of his chief *Ministers*, as were not accountable to any other *Judge*; nor was the divine Majesty any more *debas'd* in condescending to make this Decision, than any earthly *Prince* wou'd be, by interposing his Authority to determine a Controversy between two of his great and powerful Subjects.

Why *Moses*  
mentions it.

*MOSES* indeed inserts a Passage, to shew, that the Occasion of this Family-Quarrel was not from him; that he was a Man of a meek and peaceable Disposition, and there-

Why *Moses*  
might com-  
mend him-  
self, with-  
out endan-  
gering the

F f 4

And therefore *Hobab*, having liv'd long a Borderer upon the Wilderness, was well acquainted with every Part of it, and the better able to advise them both whence to provide themselves with such Things as they wanted, and how to secure themselves against any neighbouring Powers, that shou'd attempt to assault them; and for these Reasons *Moses* was so pressing for his staying with him; though the *Septuagint* understand the Passage, as if he desir'd him to continue to be what he had hitherto been in the Wilderness, *viz.* a good Adviser, like his Father *Jethro*, and withal assur'd him, that he would look upon him as an Elder. *Patrick's Commentary.*

Authen-  
tickness of  
his Wri-  
tings.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28.  
to Numb.  
xviii.

fore not addicted to Strife and Contention, especially with those of his own Kindred ; and why might he not insert this, when it was no more than what was due to his Character, and perhaps, at that Time, necessary for his own Vindication ? St. *Paul*, to clear himself from some Aspersions, which the Malice of his Enemies had cast upon him, enters upon his own Commendation, tho' it be with some Reluctancy, and to give it a better *Gloss*, tries all the Powers of Eloquence in working it up. (e) *Whereinsoever any is bold*, says he, *I speak foolishly, I am bold also. Are they Hebrews ? So am I. Are they Israelites ? So am I. Are they the Seed of Abraham ? So am I. Are they Ministers of Christ ? I speak as a Fool, I am more : In Labours more abundant, in Stripes above Measure : In Prisons more frequent : In Deaths often.—— In Perils of Waters, in Perils of Robbers, in Perils by my own Countrymen, in Perils by the Heathen, in Perils in the City, in Perils in the Wilderness, in Perils in the Sea, in Perils among false Brethren : In Weariness and Painfulness, in Watchings often ; in Hunger and Thirst, in Fastings often ; in Cold and Nakedness ; besides those Things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the Care of all the Churches.* These are the Words of our Apostle, setting off the faithful Discharge of his Ministry ; and yet no one ever suspected the *Genuineness* of this his Epistle to the *Corinthians* upon that Account : As little Reason have we therefore to call in Question the *Authentickness* of this Book of *Moses*, because we find a Passage or two that speaks favourably of him.

THAT all Historians, both *antient* and *modern*, when they come to speak of the Part, and Concern, they had in such and such Actions, are commonly accusom'd to speak in the *third* Person ; and that the modestest Man upon Earth may sometimes see Occasion to magnify his Office, or vindicate himself, without deserving the Imputation of Vanity or Arrogance, cannot be deny'd. Now considering what Share it was, that *Moses* himself bore in the Facts which he relates, and that the Narrations, Laws, and Admonitions which he recorded, were not design'd for that Age only, but directed to all succeeding Generations of the World ; and withal considering, that the seditious and turbulent Behaviour of his Brother and Sister at that Time oblig'd

(e) 2 Cor. xi. 21, &c.



oblig'd him to justify and clear himself; there was no imaginable Way more proper for him to express himself in, than that which he made Use of, even had it been a Matter of his own Study and Contrivance: But then, if we suppose, that he wrote by divine Inspiration, the Commendation that is given of his natural Lenity and good Nature, must be look'd upon, rather as the *Holy Ghost's* Testimony concerning *Moses*, than *Moses's* Testimony concerning himself.

THO' *Moses* was certainly a good-natur'd Man, and therefore cou'd not live long at Variance with his Brother *Aaron*, yet we can hardly suppose, that his Love and Affection for him wou'd ever prevail with him to enter into any fraudulent Measures, in order to raise him to the *Pontificate*. The Rod, which gave *Aaron* the Preference, was not (as we noted before) *Moses's* wonder-working Rod, but, in all Probability, one of the same Tree, from whence the Princes of the other Tribes cut theirs. All these Rods, with the Names of the several Tribes engrav'd upon them, were deliver'd to *Moses* in the Face of the whole Congregation, and by him were instantly carry'd into the Tabernacle: And, that he did not palm upon the People, when his Back was turn'd, and put an *Almond Twig* into the Place of *Aaron's* Rod, is evident from what is related of it, *viz.* that it had Leaves, Buds, Blossoms, and ripe Fruit upon it, all at one Time, which no Tree of any Kind ever was known to have before.

SOME of the Vulgar and less Curious might perhaps, at a cursory View, have been impos'd upon, by a sham Appearance of these Things painted on *Aaron's* Rod: But *Moses* knew very well that he had the *Heads* of each Tribe to deal with; Men of Sagacity and Observation, and who were too nearly concern'd in the Experiment to let any Pretence to a Miracle go unexamin'd: And therefore we may very well imagine, that when he brought forth all the Rods the next Morning, they survey'd every one very carefully, and made diligent Search into the Alteration, which had pass'd upon that, which belong'd to *Aaron*; and had they found any Deception in it, wou'd have expos'd the two Brothers to Contempt and Ridicule, or rather have depos'd them from all Rule and Power for the Future, as a Couple of vile and impious *Impostors*. But, instead of that, we find that this Miracle silenc'd all Cavils for ever after against *Aaron* and his Family; confirm'd the

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb.  
xviii.

That there  
was no  
juggle in  
*Aaron's* Rod  
blossoming.

A. M. the Authority of *Moses* ; and made the People (when he  
 2514, &c. told them, that, by God's Appointment, he had laid up  
 Ant. Chriſt. Aaron's Rod to be a Witneſs againſt them, that, if they  
 1490, &c. murmur'd any more, they ſhou'd moſt certainly be de-  
 From Exod. ſtroy'd) break out into this doleful Complaint ; (f) *Behold*  
 xxxiv. 28. to *we die, we periſh, we all periſh, and ſhall be conſumed with*  
 Numb. xviii. *dying* : For they began now to believe God's Threat-  
 nings, and to fear, that at one Time or other they ſhou'd  
 experience ſome heavy and ſevere Punishment, as, by this  
*new Sign*, he had convinc'd them that they juſtly de-  
 ſerv'd it.

THUS I have endeavour'd to answer moſt of the ma-  
 terial Objections, which have induſtriouſly been rais'd a-  
 gainſt the ſacred Hiſtory of this *Period* ; and were it any  
 farther Confirmation of its Truth and Authority, I might  
 add, (g) that the whole Matter of *Korah*, how he rebell'd  
 againſt *Moses*, and made a Deſection among the People,  
 for which he ſuffer'd the very Judgment that the Scripture  
 relates, was doubtleſs of ſtanding Tradition in the  *Eaſt*,  
 which the *Mahometans* have borrow'd, and given us at ſe-  
 cond Hand : That the Conſumption of *Aaron's* Sacrifice  
 (h) *by the Fire which came from the Lord*, rais'd the Re-  
 port, (i) that, in antient Times, Men did not kindle Fire  
 upon their Altars, but call'd it down from Heaven by  
 Prayer, and that the Flame was produc'd by the Deity, to  
 whom the Sacrifice was offer'd : That the Irradiation of  
*Moses's* Face, when he came down from the Mount, in-  
 troduc'd the Cuſtom among the Heathens, of adorning the  
 Images of their Gods and Heroes with a beamy Glory a-  
 bout their Heads : That the Veneration paid to his Wonder-  
 working Rod, eſtabliſh'd an Uſage, which prevails almoſt  
 every where, (k) for the great Miniſters of State to carry  
 in their Hands Wands, as Enſigns of their Office, when-  
 ever they appear at Court ; and that the budding of his  
 Brother

(f) Numb. xvii. 12, 13. (g) *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the  
 Word *Korah*. (h) Lev. ix. 24. (i) *Servius* in *Æneid*.  
 Lib. xii. ver. 200, and *Patrick's* Commentary in Locum. From  
 the Fire of the Altar, which, in the *Mosaick* Language, was  
 call'd *the Fire of the Lord*, as it came down from Heaven, and  
 was perpetually kept burning, 'tis obvious, at firſt Sight,  
 that the *Greeks* deriv'd, in the Way of Etymology, their *isla*,  
 and the *Romans* their *Vestal Fire*, ſo famous in all Hiſtory.  
*Bibliotheca Bibl.* on Numb. Annot. 2. (k) *Huet. Quæſt. Alnet.*

Brother *Aaron's Rod*, in all Probability, gave Rise to A. M. (1) the Fable of *Hercules's Club*, when left in the <sup>2514, &c.</sup> Ground, striking Root downward, and so reviving, and re-<sup>Ant. Chris.</sup> pullulating. But I chuse rather, in this Place, to remark <sup>1490, &c.</sup> the great Affinity between the divine and human Laws, so <sup>From Exod.</sup> far as they relate to what we call the *Decalogue*, in-<sup>xxxiv. 28. to</sup> <sup>Numb. xviii.</sup>  much that, whatever the antient heathen Law-givers have enacted about these Matters, seems little more than a Transcript from the Ten Commandments, which *Moses* deliver'd to the *Jews*.

THUS, the *Unity of God*, and the *Folly of making any Image of him* (which constitute the two first Commandments) was an (m) Institution of *Numa*, which he took from *Pythagoras*, who maintain'd that there was only one supreme Being, and that, as he is perfectly spiritual, and the Object of the Mind only, no visible Representation can be made of him. *The Reverence of God's holy Name* (which is the Subject of the third) was recogniz'd by the Heathens in all their solemn Contracts, Promises, and Asseverations; and for this Reason, *Plato* (in his Book *de Legibus*) acquaints us, that it is (n) an excellent Lesson, to be very cautious and tender, in so much as mentioning the very Name of God. The setting apart one Day in seven, and the Observation of it for religious Purposes, was a Practice so general in the Pagan World, that, according to *Philo*, this seventh Day was truly call'd Εορτή πανδημη, or the universal Festival, and by the *Athenians*, according to the Laws then in force, was observ'd with the utmost Strictness, and such as admitted of no servile Work. *The Honour and Respect due to Parents* was secur'd by that excellent Law made by *Solon*, which declares, (o) that, if any one strike his Parents, or does not maintain them, and provide them a Dwelling, and all Things necessary, let him be utterly disregarded, and banish'd from all civil Society. *The Prohibition of Murder* is confirm'd by the Laws of *Athens*, which make its Punishment capital, when wilfully committed; Banishment, when by Chance-medley; and for every Maim, designedly given, imposes both a Confiscation of Goods, and a Proscription from the City, where the injur'd Person dwells. *The Prohibition of Adultery* was sufficiently enforc'd by *Solon*, when he left the guilty Persons, when

(1) Huet. *ibid.* (m) Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. v. and *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on Exod. xx. 4. (n) De Leg. Lib. ii. (o) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on Deut. Dissert. 3.



A. M. when apprehended in the Fact, to the Mercy of the injur'd  
 2514, &c. Husband, who, if he suffer'd them to escape with their  
 Aht. Christ. Lives, had Licence to handle the Man very roughly, (p) and  
 1490, &c. to divorce the Woman, who, for her Crime, was excluded  
 From Exod. all Places of publick Concourse, and reduc'd below the Con-  
 xxiv. 28. to dition of a Slave. The *Prohibition of Theft* was supported  
 Numb. xviii. by a Law of *Draco's*, which made Felons of what Deno-  
 mination soever lose their Lives for their Crime; but this  
 being thought too severe, *Solon's* Institution was, that every  
 petty Larceny shou'd be punish'd with double Restitution,  
 and sometimes Imprisonment, but every greater Robbery, to  
 the Value of fifty *Drachms*, with Death. The *Prohibition*  
*of False Witness* was (q) ratify'd by the *Athenian* Laws,  
 which not only punish'd the Offenders with Fines, Confisca-  
 tion of Goods, and Banishment, but degraded them likewise  
 from all Dignity, as Persons extremely ignominious, and who  
 (according (r) to the Law of the *twelve Tables*) deserv'd to  
 be thrown from the *Tarpeian Rock*. The *Prohibition of Co-*  
*vetousness* of all Kinds, (which is the Tenth and last Com-  
 mandment) no where occurs in the Edicts of any antient  
 Legislator; for (as (s) a pious Bishop well observes) *all the*  
*Laws, that were ever made by any Governours upon Earth, re-*  
*spected only the Words and Actions, or the outward Car-*  
*riage and Behaviour of their Subjects. None ever offer'd*  
*to give Laws to the Minds, or Hearts of Men, what they*  
*shou'd think, or love, or desire, or the like; and it wou'd*  
*have been ridiculous and absurd to have done it, because they*  
*cou'd never have known, whether such Laws were observ'd*  
*or no; so proper is the Question, which their great Law-*  
*giver puts to the Jews, (t) what Nation is there so great,*  
*that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this*  
*Law, which I set before you this Day?* So just the Com-  
 mendation, which the Royal Psalmist gives of it. *The Law*  
*of the Lord is an undefiled Law, converting the Soul: The*  
*Testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth Wisdom unto the*  
*Simple*——— *Moreover by them is thy Servant taught, and*  
*in keeping of them there is great Reward.*

D I S-

(p) Archbishop Potter's *Greek Antiquities*. (q) *Bibliotheca*  
*Bibl. ibid.* (r) A. Gell. Lib. xii. chap. 1. (s) Bishop  
*Beveridge*, upon the Catechism. (t) Deut. iv. 8. and Psal.  
 xix. 7, &c.

DISSERTATION II.

*Of the Jewish TABERNACLE, &c.*

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 20.  
to Numb.  
xviii.

FROM the very first Beginning of Time, God had always some Place appropriated to the solemn Duties of religious Worship. (*u*) Even during the small Space of his Continuance in *Paradise*, Adam had (*x*) where to present himself before the Lord; and, after his Expulsion from thence, *his Sons*, in like Manner, had (*y*) whither to bring their Oblations and Sacrifices. The *Patriarchs*, both before and after the Flood, us'd (*z*) Altars, and (*a*) Mountains, and (*b*) Groves, for the self-same Purpose. Here they had their *Proseuchæ*, or Places for Prayer, which were certain Plats of Ground, encompass'd with a Wall, or some other Enclosure, and open'd above. But since the first Place of this Kind, that made any considerable Figure, was the *Tabernacle*, which God order'd *Moses* to erect in the Wilderness, as an Habitation for his Majestick Presence to reside in, it may not be improper, in this Place, to give some Account of it, and the other holy Things appertaining to it.

THE *Tabernacle* was a Tent, cover'd with Curtains and Skins, but much larger, than other Tents: It was in the Form of an oblong Square, thirty Cubits in Length, and ten in Height and Breadth, and was properly divided into *two Parts*, viz. the *Holy Place*, and the *Holy of Holies*. The *Holy Place* was twenty Cubits long, and ten wide, where stood the Table of Shew-Bread, the Golden Candlestick, and the Altar of Incense. The *Holy of Holies* (which was likewise call'd the *Sanctuary*) was ten Cubits long, and ten broad, contain'd the *Ark of the Covenant*, and was separated from the *Holy Place* by a *Veil*, or Hanging made of rich embroider'd Linnen, which hung upon four Pillars of *Shittim* or *Cedar Wood*, that were cover'd with Plates of Gold, but had their Bases made of Brass; and at the Entrance of the *Tabernacle*, instead of a Door, there was a Veil of the same Work, sustain'd by the like Pillars, which separated it from the outward Court.

*A Description of the Tabernacle.*

THE

(*u*) *Hooker's Eccles. Polity*, Lib. v.  
(*y*) *Ibid.* iv. 3.      (*z*) *Ibid.* xiii. 4.  
(*b*) *Ibid.* xxi. 33.

(*x*) *Gen.* iii. 8.  
(*a*) *Ibid.* xxii. 1.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

THE Boards, or Planks, whereof the Body of the Tabernacle was compos'd, were in all forty-eight, each a Cubit and an half wide, and ten Cubits high. Twenty of them went to make up one Side of the Tabernacle, and twenty the other, and at the *West End* of it were the other eight, which were all let into one another by two *Tenons* above and below, and compacted together by Bars running from one End to the other ; but the *East End* of it was open, and only cover'd with a rich Curtain.

THE *Roof* of the Tabernacle was a square Frame of Planks, resting upon their Bases ; and, over these, were Coverings, or Curtains of different Kinds. Of these the *first*, on the Inside, was made of fine Linnen, curiously embroider'd in various Colours of Crimson, and Scarlet, and Purple, and Hyacinth : The *next* was made of Goats Hair neatly wove together ; and the *last* of Sheep and Badgers Skins, (some dy'd Red, and others of azure Blue) which were to preserve the rich Curtains from wet, and to protect the Tabernacle itself from the Injuries of the Weather.

THE *Court*, ROUND about the Tabernacle was a large oblong Court, an hundred Cubits long, and fifty broad, encompass'd with Pillars overlaid with Silver, and whose Capitals were of the same Metal, but their Bases were of Brass. Ten of these Pillars stood towards the *West*, six to the *East*, twenty to the *North*, and twenty to the *South*, at five Cubits Distance from each other ; and over these hung Curtains made of twined Linnen-thread, in the Manner of Net-work, which surrrounded the Tabernacle on all Sides, except at the *Entrance* of the Court, which was twenty Cubits wide, and sustain'd with four *Columns*, over-laid with Plates of Silver. These Columns had their *Capitals* and *Bases* of Brass ; were plac'd at proportionable Distances, and cover'd with a Curtain made of richer Materials.

THE *Altar of Burnt-Offerings*, IN this Court, and opposite to the Entrance of the Tabernacle, stood the *Altar of Burnt-Offerings* in the open Air, that the Fire, which was kept perpetually upon it, and the Smoke arising from the Victims, that were burnt there, might not spoil the Inside of the Tabernacle. It was five Cubits long, as much in Width, and three Cubits high ; was plac'd upon a Basis of Stone-Work, and cover'd, both within and without, with Brass Plates. At the four Corners of this Altar there was something like four Horns, cover'd with the same Metal, and, as the Altar itself was hollow, and open both at Top and Bottom, from these Horns there hung



hung a Grate made of Brass, (fasten'd with four Rings and four Chains) whereon the Wood and the Sacrifice were burnt; and, as the Ashes fell through, they were receiv'd below in a Pan. At a very small Distance from this Altar there stood, on the *South Side*, a brazen Vessel, which, on Account of its extraordinary Size, was call'd the *Brazen Sea*, in which the Priests were us'd to wash their Feet, whenever they were to offer Sacrifice, or to go into the Tabernacle.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28. to  
Numb. xviii.

IN that Part of the Tabernacle, which was call'd the *Holy Place*, there was, on the *North Side*, a *Table* made of *Shittim* or Cedar Wood, cover'd with Gold, two Cubits long, one in Breadth, and one and an half in Length. About the Edge of it was an Ornament, or Border made of Gold, together with a Crown of Gold in the Middle, and, at each End, was plac'd the Offering of the *Shew-Bread*, viz. six Loaves in a Pile, to represent the twelve Tribes. The Bread was chang'd every Day, and not allow'd to be eaten by any but the Priests.

*The Table of  
Shew-Bread.*

OVER against this Table, on the *South Side*, stood the *Candlestick*, which was made of pure Gold, upon a Basis of the same Metal, and had seven Branches on each Side, and one in the Middle. These Branches were, at equal Distances, adorn'd with six Flowers like Lillies, with as many Knobs like Apples, and little Bowls like half Almond-Shells, plac'd alternately; and upon each of these Branches there was a golden Lamp, which was lighted every Evening, and extinguish'd every Morning.

*The Golden  
Candlestick.*

BETWIXT the Table and the *Candlestick*, was plac'd the *Altar of Incense*, which was but one Cubit in Length and Breadth, and two Cubits high; but was cover'd with Plates of Gold, and had a Crown of Gold over it. Every Morning and Evening, the Priest in Waiting for that Week offer'd Incense of a particular Composition upon this Altar, and to this End carry'd a smoking Censer, fill'd with Fire, which he took from the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, into the Tabernacle, and so, placing it upon this other Altar, retir'd.

*And the Al-  
tar of In-  
cense.*

THE Persons appointed to officiate about holy Things were of three Kinds, the High-Priest, Priests, and Levites: And, what is very remarkable in the first of this Order, is, the Singularity of his *Vestments*, which were the Breast-plate, the Ephod, the Robe, the Close-coat, the Mitre, and the Girdle. The *Ephod*, the *Robe*, and the *Close-coat* were all of Linnen, and cover'd the whole Body from the Neck

*The High-  
Priest, and  
his Vest-  
ments.*

A. M. to the Heel. Over these was a purple or blue *Tunick*,  
 2514, &c. which reach'd not so low, but was curiously wrought all  
 Ant. Chris. over, and, at the Bottom of it, had Pomegranates, and  
 1490, &c. Bells, intermix'd at equal Distances. The Pomegranates  
 From Exod. were made of blue, purple, and crimson Wool, and \* the  
 xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii. Bells of Gold.

*The Ephod.* THE *Ephod* was a Kind of Girdle, made of gold Thread,  
 and other Threads of divers Colours, which, being brought  
 from behind the Neck, and over the two Shoulders, was  
 put cross upon the Stomach; then carry'd round the Waist,  
 and brought back again about the Body did gird the *Tunick*  
 like a *Sash*, and so fell down before, and hung as low as the  
 Feet. Upon that Part of the *Ephod*, which came upon the  
 High-

\* What the Number of the Bells, worn by the High-Priest,  
 was, the Scripture is silent, and Authors are not so well agreed,  
 but the sacred Historian has let us into the Use and Intent of  
 them in these Words; *And it shall be upon Aaron to minister :  
 And his Sound shall be heard when he goeth into the Holy Place  
 before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not.* The  
 Kings of *Persia* are said to have the Hem of their Robes a-  
 dorn'd, like the *Jewish* High-Priest, with Pomegranates, and  
 gold Bells. The Ladies, who are about his Person, and whose  
 Business it is to please and divert him, have little gold Bells  
 fasten'd to their Legs, their Neck, and Elbows, and when they  
 dance, the Sound of these makes a very agreeable Harmony.  
 The *Arabian* Princesses wear large hollow Gold Rings, which  
 are fill'd with little Flints, and make a Sound, like little Bells,  
 when they walk; and besides these, they have Abundance of  
 little flat Bobs fasten'd to the Ends of their Hair, which make  
 a Noise, as often as they stir, and give Notice that the Mistress  
 of the House is going by, that so the Servants of the Family  
 may behave themselves respectfully, and Strangers retire, to  
 avoid seeing the Person that is passing. It was therefore, in all  
 Probability, with a Design of giving Notice, that the High-  
 Priest was passing by, that he too wore little Bells on the Hem  
 of his Robe; or rather, it was (as it were) a Kind of publick  
 Notice, that he was going into the Sanctuary; for, as in the  
 King of *Persia's* Court, no one was suffer'd to enter the Apart-  
 ments, without giving Notice thereof by the Sound of some-  
 thing; so the High-Priest, out of Respect to the divine Pre-  
 sence, residing in the *Holy of Holies*, did, by the Sound of little  
 Bells, fasten'd to the Bottom of his Robe, desire, as it were,  
 Permission to enter, *that the Sound of the Bells might be heard,  
 and he not punished with Death for an unmannerly Intrusion.*  
*Calmet's Dictionary, under the Word Bell.*

High-Priest's Shoulders, were two large precious Stones, A. M. 2514, &c. Ant. Chris. 1490, &c. From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii. whereon were engraven the Names of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, on each Stone six; and where the *Ephod* cross'd the High-Priest's Breast, there was a square Ornament, call'd the *Pectoral*, or *Rational*, wherein were twelve precious Stones set, with the Names of the twelve Tribes engraven on them, on each Stone one. The *Mitre* was of fine Flax: It cover'd the Head; and on the Forehead was a Plate of Gold, whereon were engrav'd these Words, HOLINESS TO THE LORD, which was ty'd, behind the Head, with two Ribbons fasten'd to its two Ends. The Pectoral. The Mitre.

THESE were the chief of the solemn Ornaments, which belong'd to the High-Priest. The other Priests had only a simple *Tunick*, a Linnen *Mitre*, and a *Girdle*; but they all of them wore Linnen or Cotton *Breeches*, which cover'd their Legs and Thighs, and reach'd up to their Waist. The *Levites* had no peculiar Habit in the Ceremonies of Religion; but, about the sixty-second Year of *Christ*, they obtain'd of King *Agrippa* Leave to wear a Linnen *Tunick*, as well as the Priests. The Habits of other Officers.

THE *High-Priest* was at the Head of all religious Affairs, and the ordinary Judge of all the Difficulties, which related to them. He only had the Privilege of entering into the *Sanctuary* once a Year, which was on the Day of solemn *Expiation*, to make Atonement for the Sins of the whole People. The ordinary Priests attended the Service of the *Tabernacle*: They kept up a perpetual *Fire* upon the Altar of *Burnt-Offerings*; lighted, and extinguish'd the *Lamps* of the *Golden-Candlestick*; made the Loaves of *Shew-Bread*; offer'd them on the golden Altar in the *Sanctuary*; chang'd them every *Sabbath-day*; and every Day, at Night and Morning, carry'd in a smoking Censer of Incense, and plac'd it upon the golden Table, which upon this Account was likewise call'd the *Altar of Incense*. The Office of the Priests.

BUT the chief Business of the Priests was to offer Sacrifices, of which there were four Kinds. 1. The *Burnt-Offering*, which was totally consum'd by Fire upon the Altar, after that the Feet and Entrails had been wash'd. 2. The *Peace-Offering*, whereof the inward Fat, or Tallow, made up with the Liver and Kidnies, was only burnt upon the Altar: The Breast and right Shoulder was the *Perquisite* of the Priests, who were oblig'd to eat them in the *Holy-place*; and the Remainder belong'd to the Person, who offer'd the Sacrifice. 3. The *Sacrifice for Sin*, committed either wilfully or ignorantly: And in this the Priest



A. M. took some of the Blood of the Victim, dipp'd his Finger in it, and sprinkled it seven Times towards the Vail of the *Sanctuary*. The same Parts of the Victim were burnt on the Altar, in *this*, as in the former Sacrifice. The rest (if the Sacrifice was offer'd for the Sin of the *High-Priest*, or for the *People*) was carry'd without the Camp, and there burnt; but, if it was for a *private* Person, the Victim was divided (as was said before) between the Priest, and the *Offerer*. 4. The *Sacrifice of Oblation* was either fine Flour, or Incense, Cakes of fine Flour, and Oil bak'd, or the first Fruits of new Corn. Oil, Salt, Wine, and Frankincense went always along with every Thing that was offer'd. All the Frankincense was cast into the Fire; but of the other Things the Priest only burnt a Part, and the rest he reserv'd to himself.

THUS we have taken a cursory View of the *Jewish* Tabernacle, and its Utensils; of the *Jewish* Priesthood, and its Offices; and have nothing more to do, but to enquire a little for what \* Ends and Uses God was pleas'd to institute these

\* *Josephus*, having treated of the Tabernacle, and the several Things appertaining to it, makes the Use and Design of them a little too *mystical* and *allegorical*. " Let but a Man consider, says he, the Structure of the Tabernacle, the sacerdotal Vestments, and the holy Vessels, that are dedicated to the Service of the Altar, and he must of Necessity be convinc'd, that our *Law-giver* was a pious Man. — For what are all these but the Image of the *whole World*? The *Tabernacle*, consisting of thirty Cubits, and being divided into *three* Parts, whereof two are for the Priests in general and of free Access, resembles the *Earth* and the *Sea*; while the *third*, where no Mortal (except the *High-Priest*) is permitted to enter, is an Emblem of *Heaven*, reserv'd for God alone. The *twelve Loaves of Shew Bread*, upon the Table, signify the *twelve Months* in the Year. The *Candlestick*, which is made up of seventy Pieces, refers to the twelve Signs of the *Zodiac*, through which the seven *Planets* take their Course; and the seven *Lamps*, on the Top of the seven Branches, bear an Analogy to the *Planets* themselves. The *Curtains*, with the *four Colours* that are wrought in them, represent the *four Elements*. — By the *High-Priest's Linnen Garment* is design'd the whole Body of the *Earth*; and, by the *Violet Colour*, the *Heavens*. The *Pomegranates* answer to *Lightning*; and the Noise of the *Bells* to *Thunder*. The *four-coloured Ephod* bears a Resemblance to the very Nature of the *Universe*, and the interweaving it with *Threads of Gold*, to the

these Things. To this Purpose, St. Paul informs us, that the Jewish Law was an imperfect Dispensation from the very first, and (d) added only because of Transgressions, until the Seed should come, to whom the Promise was made: That, in great Condescension, it was adapted to the Weakness of the Jewish People, whom he compares to an Heir under a Tutor or Governor; for these are his Words: (e) I say then, that an Heir, as long as he is a Child, differeth nothing from a Servant, tho' he be Lord of all: Even so we, when we were Children, were in Bondage, under the Elements of the World; so that (f) the Law was our School-master, to bring us unto Christ, and (g) having only a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image of the Things, it could never, with those Sacrifices, which were offered, Year by Year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect. In order therefore to illustrate this Point, viz. that the Jewish Religion was, in a great Measure, intended to typify and prefigure the more perfect Dispensation of the Gospel, we shall instance in some of its Particulars already enumerated.

THUS the Tabernacle itself was a Type of our Redeemer dwelling in our Nature; for so St. John tells us, that (h) the Word was made Flesh, and ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, dwelt among us, as in a Tabernacle. The Altar of Burnt-Offerings in the Court pointed out the Death and Sacrifice (i) of our Lord, by the shedding of whose Blood our Sins are pardon'd, and we receiv'd into Mercy and Favour. The Altar of Incense within the Holy Place denoted our Lord's powerful Intercession for us, in his exalted State of Glory; and the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies was an eminent Emblem of him, from whose Mouth we receiv'd a Law, founded upon better Promises; by whose Intercession we have Access to the Throne of Grace with all Boldness; and

G g 2

whose

“ the Rays of the Sun, which give us Light. The Pectoral, or Rational, in the middle of it, intimates the Position of the Earth in the Centre of the World; the Girdle, about the Priest's Body, is the Sea about the Globe of the Earth; the two Sardonyx Stones, on the Shoulders, represent the Sun and Moon; and, by the twelve other Stones on the Breast, may be understood either the twelve Months, or the twelve Signs in the Zodiack.” But all this is too light, and fanciful, one wou'd think, for so grave an Author, as Josephus, had not this Way of allegorizing Things been the prevailing Custom of the Age. Jewish Antiq. Lib. iii. c. 7.

(d) Gal. iii. 19. (e) Ibid. iv. 1, &c. (f) Gal. iii. 24. (g) Heb. x. 1. (h) John i. 14. (i) Heb. xiii. 10.

A. M. whose *Satisfaction* to the divine Justice is our true *Propitiatory*, or *Mercy-Seat*.  
 2514, &c. Ant. Christ.  
 1490, &c. From Exod. xxxiv. 24. to Numb. xviii.

WHAT a manifest *Type* the *Jewish High-Priest* was of our Lord and Saviour, the Author to the *Hebrews* has declar'd in more Instances than one. The *Jewish High-Priest* was the only Man, who was permitted to enter into the *Holy of Holies*; and (*k*) *we have such an High-Priest*, says the Apostle, *who is set on the Right-Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens, a Minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not Man.* The *Jewish High-Priest* offer'd a solemn Expiatory Sacrifice once a Year; our Lord (*l*) *appeared once in the End of the World to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.* After the expiatory Sacrifice, the *Jewish High-Priest* went into the *Holy Place*, there to offer Incense on the golden Altar; our Lord, *when he had purged our Sins, (m) sat down, on the Right-Hand of the Majesty on high, there (n) to appear in the Presence of God, and, by the Incense of his Merits, to make continual Intercession for us.*

And in the  
 several Sa-  
 crifices,  
 which were  
 offered.

IN like Manner, whether we consider the several *Qualifications* of the Sacrifices under the Law, or the several *Sorts* of them, we shall find them to be *Types*, and *Prefigurations* of Christ. The Conditions of a *Jewish Sacrifice* were, — That it shou'd be without Blemish, publicly presented before the Congregation, substituted in the Sinner's Room, and the Iniquities of the Sinner laid upon him. With Relation to these *Properties*, our Saviour is said to be *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from Sinners.* That he might *sanctify his People*, he is said to have (*a*) *suffered without the Gate, bearing our Reproach*; and that (*p*) *he, who knew no Sin, became Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

AND so, if we look to the several *Sorts* of Sacrifices appointed under the Law, we shall soon perceive that these equally lead us to *Christ*. For he was the *Trespass-Offering*, in that *he was made Sin for us*; the *Peace-Offering*, because (*q*) *he made Peace by the Blood of his Cross*; the *Meat and Drink-Offering*, for (*r*) *his Flesh is Meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed*; the *Scape-Goat*, for he hath carry'd away our Sins, (*s*) *never to be more remember'd against us*; the *Paschal Lamb*, for (*t*) *Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed*

(*k*) Heb. viii. 1, 2. (*l*) Ibid. ix. 26. (*m*) Ibid. i. 3. (*n*) Ibid. 9—24. (*o*) Ibid. xiii. 12, 13. (*p*) 2 Cor. v. 21. (*q*) Col. i. 20. (*r*) John vi. 55. (*s*) Ibid. i. 29. (*t*) 1 Cor. v. 7.



CHAP. II. *from the Israelites Departure from Egypt, &c.* 485  
*sacrificed for us; the great Sacrifice of Atonement, (u) for* A. M. 2514, &c.  
*Jesus Christ the Righteous is both our Advocate with the* Ant. Chris. 1490, &c.  
*Father, and a Propitiation for our Sins: And, in fine, (x)* From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.  
*his Blood, who, thro' the Eternal Spirit offered himself to*  
*God, without Spot, is more effectual, than the Blood of Bulls*  
*and Goats, to purge our Consciences from dead Works, to*  
*serve the living God.*

THUS it appears, that the chief End of the several *The Change of the Jewish Religion consistent with God's Attributes.*  
Institutions, relating to the ceremonial Part of the *Jewish* Worship, was to prefigure the Person, and Transactions of our blessed Saviour, (y) *when the Fulness of Time was come* that God should send forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem those, that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons. And therefore, since the Ceremonies of the *Jewish* Law cou'd never be of any Esteem in the Sight of God, any otherwise, than as they promoted this End, and prepar'd Men's Minds for the Reception of a more perfect Institution of Religion; it is manifest, that, when this more perfect Institution was once settled, the former, and more imperfect was, of Course, to cease; (z) *there being necessarily a disannulling of the Commandment going before, for the Weakness and Unprofitableness thereof.*

AND from hence we may, finally, infer, that, tho' the *Essence* of Religion be eternally and immutably the same, yet the Form and Institution of it may be, and often has been, chang'd. (a) The *Essence* of all Religion is *Obedience* to that *moral and eternal Law*, which obliges us to imitate the Life of God in Justice, Mercy, and Holiness, *i. e. to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.* This is the Sum of all *natural Religion*, as appears from the Discourses of those wiser *Heathens*, who were free from Prejudice, and Superstition. This was the Sum of the *Jewish Religion*, as appears from the frequent and earnest Protestations of God to that People by his Servants the *Prophets*: And this likewise is the Sum of the *Christian Religion*, as the Apostles every where inculcate. But, though Religion itself is thus immutably the same, yet the Form and Institution of it may be different.

WHEN Natural Religion, by Reason of its Obscurity, in this corrupt Estate of human Nature, prov'd ineffectual to make Men truly religious, God left them no longer to the Guidance

(u) 1 John ii. 1, 2. (x) Heb. ix. 13, 14. (y) Gal. iv. 4, 5. (z) Heb. vii. 18. (a) Dr. Samuel Clarke's Sermon. Vol. X.

A. M.  
2514, &c.  
Ant. Chrif.  
1490, &c.  
From Exod.  
xxxiv. 28.  
to Numb.  
xviii.

Guidance of their Reason only, but gave them first the *Patriarchal*, and afterwards the *Mosaick* Dispensation; and when (through the Incumbrance with so many *ritual* Observances) this latter prov'd ineffectual to the same great End, God abolish'd this Form of Religion likewise, and instituted the *Christian*. In all which Proceeding, there is no Reflection at all upon the *immutable* Nature of God. For, as the Divine Nature is, in the truest and highest Sense, *unchangeable*; so Religion itself, in its Nature and Essence, is likewise *unchangeable*: But, as the Capacities, the Prejudices, and the Circumstances of Men are different, so the *Institution*, and outward *Form* of that Religion (which in its *Essence* is always the same) may, with the good Pleasure of God, be chang'd; even as a careful Nurse (to use a Scripture Comparison upon this Occasion) adapts the *Diet* to the Strength and Constitution of the Person she attends: *For every one, that useth Milk* (as the Elements of the *Jewish* Dispensation were) *is unskilful in the Word of Righteousness, for he is a Babe; but strong Meat* (or a Religion of a greater Perfection, as the *Christian* is) *belongeth to them, that are of full Age; even those, who, by Reason of Use, have their Senses exercised to discern both Good and Evil.*

The END of the Second VOLUME.







$$\begin{array}{r}
 445 \\
 425 \\
 \hline
 10
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r}
 652 \\
 645 \\
 \hline
 7
 \end{array}$$

